

NEW YORK, JUNE 4, 1926

No. 1079

Price 8 Cents

# FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY.

## STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

### AMONG THE TUSK HUNTERS; OR THE BOY WHO FOUND A DIAMOND MINE.



As Jack and Ada stood gazing at the hole containing the rough diamonds, a rustling among the bushes startled them. Looking up, they saw that they were surrounded by a crowd of Kaffirs, two of whom threatened them with their spears.



# FA ME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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## Among the Tusk Hunters

OR, THE BOY WHO FOUND A DIAMOND MINE

By A SELF-MADE MAN

### CHAPTER I.—Noah Webb.

"I wonder what that thing is yonder?" muttered Jack Cleveland, standing by the rail of the British brig "Cinnabar," as he looked at a small object rising and falling on the surface of the broad Atlantic in the full glare of the setting sun.

Jack was a bright American boy who was making a long ocean voyage from New York to Cape Town, South Africa, for his health, under the wing of Professor Casey, who was something of a naturalist as well as an expert in mathematics. Ambitious to outshine his fellow students at the Norwood Institute, Oakdale, L. I., Jack had studied so hard all winter and spring that when vacation time arrived he was so badly knocked out that the family physician advised an extended sea voyage in a sailing vessel.

Professor Casey, an old college associate of Jack's father, having announced his intention of going to Cape Town on the brig "Cinnabar," instead of by fast mail steamer via Southampton, England, Mr. Cleveland decided to send his son under his charge, a responsibility that the professor willingly accepted in the light of old friendship. The brig was now within about two weeks' sail of her destination, and Jack had improved so much in health since leaving New York many weeks since that he declared he felt as good as he ever did in his life.

Professor Casey's ultimate destination was the diamond mines of Kimberly, and Jack was delighted at the idea of visiting the famous South African diamond fields, of which he had heard and read so much. During the voyage he had gleaned a fund of information about diamonds and diamond digging from the professor. Professor Casey had fully explained how diamonds were found in the rough; what they looked like in that state, and the methods followed at the different mines for bringing them to light, so that the boy felt sure that he would know a diamond in whatever state it was presented to his notice.

"What are you looking at so intently, Jack?" asked Professor Casey, stepping up beside the hero of this story.

"I'm looking at that black patch in the sunshine yonder," replied the boy. "Take a peep

at it, professor," he added, tendering the glass to his companion.

Professor Casey leveled the glass at the spot indicated by Jack and made out the object which had attracted the lad's notice. He couldn't tell what it was, though. At that moment the lookout, seated astride of the foremast cross-trees, hailed the deck. The chief mate, who was in charge of the deck, advanced to the break in the poop and asked him what he had to communicate. The lookout replied that he had sighted something three points on the port bow that looked like a raft. The mate thereupon stepped over to Jack, who had borrowed his binoculars, and taking the glasses sprang into the rigging and focused the floating object. He judged that it was a raft, and the possibility that there might be shipwrecked people on it induced him to alter the brig's course so as to overhaul the object.

"Is it a raft, Mr. Finley?" Jack asked the mate when he returned to the poop.

"Yes, I think it is," was the reply.

"Any persons on it?" continued the boy in some excitement.

"Couldn't say as yet; but I saw no indications of it in the glass."

"A raft floating about at sea indicates a shipwreck, doesn't it?"

The "Cinnabar," under a strong breeze, rapidly overhauled the raft, and as the distance was reduced the mate jumped into the rigging again to get another view of it. Whatever he saw this time caused him to call several sailors to man one of the brig's boats, which was presently in the water and pulling for the raft while the vessel was hove to to await its return. The mate then went into the cabin to tell the captain, who followed him on deck. Inside of five minutes the boat was hoisted up to the davits and the castaway was taken out of her and laid on the deck amidships.

He was a small man, with unprepossessing features, which were not improved by a cast in one of his eyes. A two-weeks' growth of beard stuck out through his tanned features. He was dressed only in a dirty shirt, a jacket, and a pair of disreputable trousers, secured at his waist by a sailor's belt. A stiff glass of rum revived him, and he sat up without assistance and looked around him.



"Well," said the mate, who had descended to the deck, followed by Jack Cleveland, to meet him, while the watch on deck and several of those not on duty gathered in a circle around, curious to find out what had sent this unsavory-looking personage adrift all by himself, "what is your name, my man, and how came you to be at sea on that raft?"

The castaway squinted at his questioner a moment and then said in a weak voice:

"My name is Noah Webb. I was cook of the 'Dunbar Castle,' bound from Cardiff to Calcutta. The ship foundered two weeks ago after a storm."

"What became of the officers and crew?" asked the mate.

"All the boats were stove but one, and most of 'em took to that."

"And the others built that raft, I suppose, and left the ship on it with you, eh?"

"Yes," replied Webb in a surly tone.

"What became of them? How is it that you were the only one we found on it?"

"They starved to death and jumped overboard," replied Webb with a shifty glint in his good eye.

"And why didn't you starve, too? You seem to be in pretty fair condition after being two weeks on the raft, as you say you were."

"I had some food in my pockets," growled the castaway.

"Oh, you did? Didn't the others bring any food away with them?"

"Not a thing."

"Why not?"

"The ship went down too quick."

"And you never offered to divide with your shipmates?" said the mate in disgust.

"Didn't have enough for myself," snarled the man.

"How did you get along without water?"

"It rained a couple of times and I caught some in my hat."

"You did, eh? I don't see that you have any hat."

"Lost it overboard yesterday."

"How many were there on the raft beside yourself when you left the vessel?"

"Five."

"And every one but you jumped overboard?"

"Yes," replied Webb, looking down at the deck.

"Why?"

"Dunno why, unless they went crazy for want of somethin' to eat."

"But you took care not to go crazy for the same cause."

The survivor of the "Dunbar Castle" made no reply, only gazed sulkily around at the ring of faces surrounding him, all of which showed disapprobation at his selfish and heartless conduct.

"See what he's got in his pockets," said the mate. "And look in his shirt, too. It is bulging out."

The castaway resented the search, but he was overhauled, nevertheless, and quite a quantity of food was found on his person. The mate looked his surprise.

"You say you've been two weeks on that raft and yet you have all that food left. You must have had more than you could carry that way when you left the ship. How did you manage to hide it from the knowledge of your companions?"

"I had some of it in a box," he said.

"There warn't no box on the raft when we took him off," put in one of the sailors who had gone in the boat.

"The box was washed overboard the other day," explained Webb sulkily.

"Well, by your own admission, and the evidence before us, you had considerable food in your possession when you left the 'Dunbar Castle,' yet you managed in some way to keep it from your companions and let them starve. Aren't you a pretty kind of a cuss? It's a wonder you have the nerve to confess."

There wasn't a sailor present but felt like taking the castaway by the scruff of the neck and tossing him overboard. The fellow eyed the mate in a wicked way, but made no reply. The mate then went aft to the poop where the captain was standing and reported the facts to the master of the brig. Captain Breeze was as much disgusted with the ex-cook's conduct as the others who had listened to the rascal's statement.

He walked over to where the man sat squatting on the deck and questioned him sharply about the loss of the "Dunbar Castle," and the subsequent experience of himself and his five companions on the craft. The fellow acted sullen and defiant, sometimes refusing to reply at all, and often contradicting himself. Both the captain and his mate began to doubt the truthfulness of the castaway's yarn as to many essential particulars.

Finally Captain Breeze told his mate to see that the rascal worked his way to Cape Town, where the skipper proposed to hand him over to the authorities, and let them deal with him as they saw fit. He then returned to his cabin to enter the particulars in his log book, while Jack Cleveland hastened to impart what he had seen and heard to Professor Casey, who had not left the poop deck.

## CHAPTER II.—The Stormy Petrel

Two days passed and the weather continued as fine as it had been for the past fortnight. The brig was gradually approaching the Cape of Good Hope, and Captain Breeze hoped to reach Cape Town within ten days, or two weeks at the outside. Time was beginning to hang heavily on Jack Cleveland's hands, for he had seen little else but sea and sky for several weeks.

"Gee! I wish something would turn up for a change, but I suppose nothing will till this brig reaches Cape Town," he said to himself as he stood on the poop leaning over the rail looking forward. "Hello! What's the matter now?" A blood-curling yell came from the open door of the galley. The sound of blows, and more yells followed.

Then Noah Webb was propelled through the doorway by the foot of the brig's cook. The cook, who was a big man, rushed out and gave the unlucky castaway another hoist that landed him a yard further along the deck. Webb rolled about on the deck like a person suffering great pain. Several sailors gathered about his prostrate form as the cook went back to his quarters, and they laughed at and poked all manner of fun at Webb.

The castaway finally sat up and shook his fist at them whereupon one of them got a rope's end and belabored the ex-cook till he roared again.



The second mate, who was in charge of the deck, did not interfere, for, like the captain and the chief mate, he had no sympathy for the fellow, who was looked upon with contempt by all on board. The sailors, after mauling and booting Webb around for awhile, drew off and left the rascal to himself. Muttering threats and expressions of rage, he disappeared into the fore-castle.

"He must have done something in the galley that the cook wouldn't stand for," thought Jack, sauntering over to have a chat with the helmsman. After dinner Jack went forward and on passing the galley door he saw Webb sulkily washing the pots and pans. The fellow glared vindictively at the boy, although Jack had in no way molested him.

While Jack was on the fore-castle talking to one of the sailors, Webb, having finished his work, sat down on the cook's stool outside the door and proceeded to smoke a pipe. He hadn't been there long before the cook came out of the fore-castle hatch, and spying his assistant taking his ease in the sunshine, he walked up behind him and grabbing him by the collar of his jacket lifted him from the stool and then applied a tremendous kick in the seat of his trousers. Webb uttered a yell as he went flying several feet away.

"Come here!" roared the cook as the castaway picked himself up. "Come here, or I'll beat you into a jelly!" Webb did not dare hold back, though he approached his persecutor in great dread.

"Go down in the lazarette under the floor of the cabin and fetch me a box of tapioca. Get a move on, or, by Christopher, I'll freshen your way with another h'ist!" When Webb came out of the passage a quarter of an hour later there was a fiendish grin on his ugly countenance. In his hand he carried the box of tapioca, inside his shirt he carried another package, containing something he had found in the stronghold. He seemed to have forgotten all his pains and aches, and almost skipped across the deck to the galley.

One of the sailors he passed looked at him in surprise. The change that had come over the castaway was something remarkable. He entered the galley, and thereafter obeyed all the orders of the cook with such alacrity that the man had no reason to attack him again. An hour before sunset a flock of Mother Carey's chickens came flying around the brig. Two or three of them actually came aboard and roosted on the main yard. Professor Casey was greatly interested in the birds and anxious to obtain a specimen which he could stuff, for he was something of a taxidermist, for his collection.

"Get your revolver, Jack, and see if you can bring down one of those that have alighted on the yard," he said. Jack hurried to his state-room, got his revolver, and started for the fore-castle, where he could get within closer range of the birds. The birds made no effort to fly away, and the boy reaching an advantageous position, raised his revolver and took aim at one of them. Before he could pull the trigger the weapon was knocked from his hand by one of the sailors.

"I beg your pardon, young man," said the seaman in an apologetic tone, "but you mustn't shoot them birds."

"Why not?" demanded Jack, in some indignation.

"Because them birds are the stormy petrel, or Mother Carey's chickens."

"What if they are? They're no different from any other sea bird that I've fired at before and nobody has made a kick."

"Yes, they are. It would bring bad luck on the brig if you or any one else on board was to kill one of them," replied the sailor.

"Oh, that's all rot—some of your sailor superstition. I read about that in story books, but never took any stock in it. How could a dead bird bring bad luck to a vessel?"

"If you had shot one of them birds we'd never reached port."

"That so? Well, that's pretty good," and Jack laughed.

The seaman, however, looked very solemn.

"If you was a sailor you'd know I speak the truth," he replied.

"Do all the sailors aboard believe the same as you do?"

The sailor nodded.

"Do the captain and mates believe the same nonsense?"

"Go and ask the skipper to allow you to shoot one of them birds and see what he says," replied the mariner.

"Say, what would prevent this brig reaching Cape Town if I shot one of those petrels?"

"Somethin' would happen. A storm, maybe, or we'd spring a leak, or some other kind of misfortune would happen to us."

"All right. I don't want to make any hard feeling between the crew and myself just on account of a bird, though I don't believe a word you say about hard luck hitting this vessel if I did shoot the petrel."

"Thank you, young man. There will be other birds in a day or two that you can shoot at as much as you choose; but never, as long as you live, kill a stormy petrel."

As the sailor turned away both he and Jack were startled by the report of a revolver close by, and one of the petrels fluttered off the yard and fell quite dead at the boy's feet. Looking down over the break of the fore-castle they saw Noah Webb standing on the deck with Jack's smoking weapon in his hand, and a malevolent grin on his face.

He had been passing at the moment the revolver was knocked out of Jack's hand and it fell within his reach. After listening to the dispute between Jack and the sailor he picked up the gun and fired at one of the birds. Whether he was a good shot, or accident had directed the ball, certain it is he hit his mark, as we have seen. Then he dropped the revolver and fled to the galley, at the door of which stood the cook, attracted by the pistol shot.

"What you been doin'?" demanded the cook.

"Shootin' one of them birds," replied Webb, trying to dart past his questioner.

The cook was too quick for him.

"Don't you know no better'n to shoot one of Mother Carey's chickens, you villain?" roared the cook, grabbing him by the nape of the neck. "I guess you'll see your finish as soon as the men get after you. I'll give you somethin' as a starter."

He then proceeded to beat Webb most unmercifully until the wretch roared and squirmed about with pain. The cook finished by kicking him across the deck to the port bulwark. The castaway was



so bruised that he could not walk, but lay moaning in the scupper. As the news of the shooting spread among the crew half a dozen of them rushed upon Webb to execute vengeance on him. Jack, who had picked up the dead bird and recovered his revolver, fearful that the men might murder the poor wretch, rushed between them and their victim.

"Stand back!" he cried, covering them with his weapon. "This is a matter for the captain to attend to. He has been pounded enough for the present."

The sailors paused, somewhat deterred by the boy's resolute demeanor.

"The scoundrel ought to be hove overboard," said one of them. "He has brought ill luck on this vessel."

"Don't you worry about that," returned Jack with a short laugh. "Nothing is going to happen to this vessel."

"You'll think differently, young man, in a day or two," replied one of the sailors with a gloomy shake of the head.

At that moment both the captain and the chief mate came hurrying to the scene of trouble. Jack in the act of holding back half of the crew at the point of a revolver was incomprehensible to them.

"What's wrong here, young man?" asked Captain Breeze. "Are you keeping my men from attacking that rascal behind you?"

He alluded to Webb, who was crouching down behind the boy in a state of abject fear.

"Yes. I'm afraid they want to toss him overboard, and that would be murder. Now that you are here I'm out of it."

Jack put his revolver in his pocket and walked away to present the dead stormy petrel to Professor Casey.

### CHAPTER III.—How Jack Saved the Brig From Becoming a Floating Coffin.

"There's the bird you wanted, professor," said Jack, handing the petrel to his traveling companion. "It's called a Mother Carey's chicken."

"Thank you, Jack; but what is the trouble on deck about? Are the sailors after that poor rascal again?"

"Yes. All on account of this bird."

"Why, how is that?"

"He shot the bird."

"I thought it was you who shot it."

"No, one of the sailors prevented me. He knocked the revolver from my hand just as I was taking aim at a bird."

"Why did he do that?" asked Professor Carey in surprise.

"He said it would bring bad luck on the brig to shoot one of those birds. That castaway chap picked up the revolver and shot the bird while the sailor was talking to me. The cook then knocked thunder out of him and the sailors wanted to toss him overboard. As I didn't want to see him murdered over a lot of superstitious rot I jumped in and stood the men off till the captain and Mr. Finley came. You can see them arguing now with the men forward."

"I see them," replied the professor. "So this is a real stormy petrel, eh?" he added, regarding the bird with great interest. "I have heard that sailors look upon it with a superstitious respect."

"Why should they?" asked Jack.

"Sailors claim that the soul of every sailor lost at sea goes into a stormy petrel, and they consider it a sacrilege to kill one of the birds. You and I, however, know that is all nonsense. The petrel is simply a species of sea bird, that's all."

"Of course. That's what I told the sailor who interfered, but he shook his head, and said if I were a sailor I'd know differently," replied Jack.

While Jack and the professor were talking the captain and the mate succeeded in calming the rage of the sailors against Noah Webb for killing the petrel. The rascal was permitted to limp into the fore-castle, where he coiled himself up in a corner and began to brood over the revenge he meant to take on everybody aboard the vessel.

Although he had no grievance against the two passengers, and ought to have felt grateful to Jack Cleveland for saving him from the vengeance of the sailors, he included them in his scheme without the least remorse, as he could not warn them without running the risk of spoiling his plan, which was nothing more or less than poisoning the plum duff that the cook had announced for dinner next day.

While looking in the lazarette for the box of tapioca he had come across a package of arsenic, and he intended to put enough of this in the pudding to insure the speedy death of everybody who ate it. What would become of the brig, with nobody aboard to work her, or himself, for that matter, did not appear to worry him much at that moment. The scheme was about as diabolical as a human being could conceive, and that it failed to go through was due to the merest accident—and Jack Cleveland.

At eleven o'clock next day the plum duff, on which the cook especially prided himself, was all made ready to put into a bag and be boiled. Noah Webb had watched the making of the pudding with greedy eyes, wondering how he could manage to get the cook out of the galley long enough to enable him to put half the arsenic in the package into the savory-looking mess. After finishing the peeling of a panful of potatoes he slipped outside for a few minutes.

On his return he told the cook that the captain wanted to see him in the cabin. Not suspecting that Noah Webb was lying, the cook, leaving the pudding on the shelf where he had been mixing it, started aft. Webb watched him till he was half-way there, then he took the package of arsenic from his shirt, tore open the end of it and sprinkled the pudding copiously with the poison. As he did this Jack Cleveland happened to pass the door of the galley and casually glanced in.

When he saw the rascal sprinkle the pudding with the contents of a package taken from his bosom he thought the action so queer that he paused to take another and keener look at what the fellow was doing. Webb put the package down on the shelf while he stirred the stuff well into the plum duff. That act saved the lives of the ship's company that day. The label on the package faced the boy, and with a gasp he read the word "Arsenic" in big, black type. Instantly the suspicion that some crooked work was going on flashed across his brain. On the spur of the moment he sprang into the galley and seized Webb by the arm.

As Jack pushed Webb up against the wall near the range, the cook entered the galley with fire in



his eye. He was just aching to get his hands on the castaway in order to pay him up for sending him on a wild-goose chase to the cabin. He stopped and stared in surprise on seeing the rascal struggling in the young passenger's grasp.

"What's the trouble, Mr. Cleveland?" he asked.

"Trouble enough, doctor. What do you suppose I caught this villain doing?"

"What was the skunk doin'?"

"Putting arsenic in your plum duff."

"What!" howled the cook, turning fairly livid with astonishment and consternation. "Puttin' arsenic in the puddin'! You can't mean that!"

"But I do mean it. Take that package out of his fingers and look at it."

The cook did so, and when he read the label great beads of perspiration stood out on his horrified face. It isn't necessary to put down the expression that passed his lips. It wouldn't look well in print, anyway.

With a roar like an enraged beast he reached for Webb and fairly tore him from Jack's grasp. The rascal tried to defend himself with the carving-knife, but the infuriated cook twisted it from his grasp, nearly breaking his wrist. Then he dragged the wretch from the galley, and calling on Jack to follow he marched straight for the captain's cabin. He entered without ceremony, hauling Webb along. Captain Breeze started to his feet, greatly annoyed by the interruption. His annoyance changed to dismay when the cook explained matters in a few words and called on the boy for corroboration. Jack then told his story straight to the point.

"You scoundrel!" cried the captain. "Did you intend to poison every one aboard the brig?"

Webb looked sulkily at the floor and had nothing to say.

"Tell Mr. Finley to step down here," said Captain Breeze to his young passenger.

Jack hurriedly conveyed the skipper's request to the chief mate on the poop. When the mate learned the condition of affairs he nearly had a fit.

"We must put the scoundrel in irons," he said hoarsely. "Hanging would be too good a punishment for such a crime as he is guilty of; but, unfortunately, the law doesn't go that far in his case, though he might get life imprisonment."

Accordingly Noah Webb was put in iron shackles and confined in a small hole called the fore-peak. There was no plum duff that day, and it wasn't long before every soul in the brig knew the reason why.

#### CHAPTER IV.—In the Grasp of the Tempest.

The sailors of the brig "Cinnabar," who had maintained a gloomy behavior since the shooting of the stormy petrel by Noah Webb, were greatly startled when they learned of the narrow escape all on board had had from wholesale poisoning. They were assured that this was one of the misfortunes that came in the train of the death of the bird, and the fact that the scheme had miscarried through the providential appearance of Jack Cleveland at the galley door at the critical moment did not serve to raise their spirits.

They argued that it was merely a warning of more trouble to come. The seaman who had knocked the revolver from Jack's hand told him

with great solemnity that the "Cinnabar" would never reach Cape Town. Nothing Jack could say availed to shake the dogged sentiments of the mariner, and the boy left him to his gloomy reflections. Jack brought the matter up at the dinner table that day.

"I've heard and read a whole lot about superstition among sailors, but I never thought they were as bad as your men appear to be," he said to the captain.

"The killing of a Mother Carey's chicken is a very serious matter among sailors," replied Captain Breeze without the flicker of a smile. "The idea that misfortune will surely follow is firmly imbedded in their minds, and no argument you might bring forward would convince them to the contrary."

"But you don't imagine for a moment, do you, that this vessel won't reach Cape Town about the time you have calculated she is due there?" asked Jack.

"I see no reason why she shouldn't," answered the skipper.

"Well, after we have reached port all right oughtn't that knock the nonsensical ideas about stormy petrels out of the men's heads?"

"I'm afraid not. They would still believe that misfortune was only temporarily averted. It is about impossible to get a life-long idea out of a sailor's head."

"I had an idea that superstition was taking a back seat these days. Everybody is getting educated to take a common sense view of things."

The captain nodded, but did not seem to wish to continue the subject. After the meal Jack, as usual, went on deck and noted with satisfaction what a fine day it was, and how the brig was making for the cape as fast as a stiff breeze could carry her on her course.

"Those sailors make me tired," he muttered as he looked around the seascape. "There isn't the slightest sign of any hard luck for us in sight. I'd be willing to bet a dollar to a doughnut that nothing will happen."

Toward sundown the breeze began to drop, and when tea was announced as ready in the cabin there was scarcely any wind at all. Jack returned to the deck to see the round orb of day disappearing below the western horizon, leaving the brig perfectly motionless on the bosom of the Atlantic.

For an hour calm and silence pervaded the deck of the brig, as it also did over the vast seascape surrounding the vessel, and then it was broken. Captain Breeze had given orders to his chief officer, and the mate was now shouting lustily to the crew, though there was not a breath of air stirring. Then Jack noticed that the star-lit sky in the southwest was disappearing as though a heavy, black pall was being drawn across it.

In the east, just as dense and black, was another mass of clouds banking themselves up toward the zenith. Nearly every sail was taken in and clewed up aboard the brig. Jack also noted the fact that the shipper remained on deck himself, and his nervous pacing of the poop showed that he was not wholly at ease. Captain Breeze and his chief mate held occasional consultations. The cause of their anxiety was the approach of two storms from almost different directions at the same time, and it was impossible to determine, as yet, which was likely to hit the vessel first.

The dense black clouds slowly approached mid-



heaven, and it was long after dark before there appeared to be any commotion of the elements. As the gloom increased streaks of lightning appeared, growing more and more vivid, the zig-zag chains of electric fluid darting angrily from the inky masses of cloud which obscured the heavens. The heavy thunder sounded nearer and more overhead, indicating the nearer approach of the two storms.

Scarcely did the flashing lightning—almost instantly followed by the cannon-like crash of the thunder—blaze and peal on one side of the brig before the flaming bolt and startling roar were taken up on the other side, as though the two tempests were vying with each other for the mastery of the air. At length from far away to southwest, between the peals of thunder, came a confused, roaring sound. At the same time a slight puff of air swelled the upper canvas of the brig that had not been taken in, and the helmsman threw the wheel over to meet her, as the vessel began to move through the still waters.

"Haul down the fore-topmost stays'ls!" shouted Captain Breeze at the top of his lungs.

"Aye, aye, sir," returned the mate.

"It's coming down on us like a tornado," said the skipper to Professor Casey. "You and Master Jack had better get under cover at once."

The professor, willing to be guided by the captain's suggestion, called to Jack and started down the companion-ladder. The mysterious darkness now surrounding the vessel, and the ghastly white line of foam advancing toward the brig from the southwest, awed Jack a good bit, and he concluded to retire to the cabin along with the professor.

"Furl the fore-tops!" cried the captain as Jack started below.

The last order the boy heard was to set the main-stays'l, but before this order could be executed the tempest was upon the brig with a rush and a roar that meant business. In fifteen minutes the storm from the eastward caught the vessel, and she became the center of the elemental strife.

A heavy bolt of lightning, accompanied at the same instant by a terrific peal of thunder, struck the main-royal mast-head, and leaped down the mast in a lurid current of fire. At the throat of the main-boom it was divided, part of it following the mast down into the cabin and hold, knocking out Jack and Professor Casey, and the rest darting off on the spar, where the second mate and four sailors were at work setting the spanker.

Every one of them was struck down lifeless to the deck. Even the man at the wheel, together with Captain Breeze, who was helping him hold the vessel on her course, shared the fate of those on the boom. The lightning had capriciously leaped from the boom to the metal work of the wheel, shattering the whole into a thousand pieces and splintering the rudder-head as though it had been so much glass. The rudder disabled, the few sails that had been set to hold the brig rent into ribbons, and the brig fell off into the trough of the sea, where she rolled helplessly at the mercy of the tempest.

It might have been eleven o'clock in the morning that Jack Cleveland came to his senses. By the dull light that now came through the daylight above the table, and down through the companion-way, he judged that the night had passed away and that it was early morning. He was confused in his head, and sore all over from the rolling and

jolting he had experienced for hours. The idea that some desperate peril hung over the vessel and all on board seemed to impress itself upon him, and yet he could not realize just what it was. He tried to fill the gap between nine o'clock the night before and the present moment, but could not. Finally his eyes rested on the apparently lifeless form of Professor Casey. Suddenly he heard a sound as if someone was in the passage. Turning around he looked at the doorway and saw, framed in the opening, the last person he would have cared to meet of the brig's company—the villainous Noah Webb, looking at him with a malevolent grin.

## CHAPTER V.—An Encounter With Webb.

"He! he! he!" chuckled the ex-cook. "So you're alive, eh?"

"Yes, and you seem to be alive, too, Noah Webb," replied Jack with a feeling of disgust that this rascal should have escaped when so many good and decent people had perished.

"Why not?" grinned Webb. "I've a right to be alive, haven't I?"

"No, I don't think you have," answered Jack frankly. "A man who tried to poison everybody aboard the brig ought to be down in the infernal regions shoveling coal."

"He! he! he!" chuckled Webb again.

"However, you're bound to get there in time. Your master, Old Nick, is no doubt allowing you a longer lease of life so that you'll ripen for the furnace."

"So you ain't glad to have somebody to talk to. You're a funny boy, he! he! he!"

"I'm not stuck on talking with you, Noah Webb. I don't fancy your rascally ways."

"S'pose I go away and leave you, how are you goin' to reach Cape Town?"

"I don't see that you can help me any."

"He! he! he! Smart boy! Think you can help yourself, eh? Know where you are?"

"Perhaps you can tell me," replied Jack sarcastically.

"I could, but I won't, he! he! he!" grinned the rascal, walking into the pantry and beginning to help himself to food.

"Well, I know we're on the coast of Africa," said Jack.

"What part of Africa?" asked Webb, eyeing him askance.

"Cape of Good Hope," answered Jack at a venture.

"He! he! he!" chuckled Webb, eating away ravenously.

"Ain't I right?" asked the boy.

Webb's only reply was another chuckle, apparently of satisfaction.

"What are you laughing at?" demanded Jack angrily.

Webb eyed the boy in a wicked way, but made no reply.

"Look here, Webb. Do you know anything about this part of Africa?" asked Jack.

"He! He! Been up and down the coast several times."

"Do you recognize this locality?"

Webb cocked his eye at Jack and grinned in an exasperating way.

"As I never did you any harm, but saved your



soul from the crime of a wholesale murder, you might give me a tip about this coast if you know anything about it."

"I'll think about it," replied Webb, tackling a pot of pressed tongue with great relish. "So you think you're on the coast of the Cape of Good Hope, eh?"

"We ought to be somewhere in that locality," replied Jack.

"Well, we ain't."

"Do you know where we are?"

"I've an idea."

"What's your idea?"

"That we're a long way from Cape Town."

"A long way!" exclaimed Jack, with a glum look.

The rascal nodded in a cheerful way, as though that fact didn't worry him any.

"How far?" continued the boy.

"About 800 miles."

Jack was rather staggered by the intelligence. He didn't suppose that they were more than half as far from South Africa's chief town. He looked at Webb and wondered if he was really telling the truth. The rascal seemed to enjoy his discomfiture. After he had eaten all he wanted he looked around and found part of a bottle of brandy. Its discovery afforded him great satisfaction and he proceeded to take frequent drinks out of the bottle. It was real French imported cognac, and the rascal soon began to show signs of intoxication. The ugly side of his nature also came to the surface. He dropped words now and then that showed his intentions toward the boy were not of a friendly character. He intimated that Jack would never reach Cape Town. From his disjointed sentences the lad gathered that the country around about that spot was occupied by blacks hostile to the white man, though they carried on a trade in ivory with a white settlement located on a bay some fifty miles south. As the rascal went off into a drunken sleep Jack decided to leave the wreck as soon as possible and make for the settlement, either by boat, if he could find one uninjured aboard, or on foot along the shore. So far as Noah Webb was concerned Jack intended to let him shift for himself. The first thing he did was to drag the intoxicated wretch into the carpenter's room off the passage, lay him on the bed and turn the key on him.

"That will keep the rascal from interfering with my arrangements in case he should sober up before I'm ready to leave the brig," said Jack.

He then went on deck, and threaded his way through the wreckage to the galley, on top of which the smallest of the brig's boats was battened down keel upward. Examining the boat he saw it had sustained no injury. The problem that presented itself to him was to free the boat from its stout fastenings, lower it to the deck, and afterward get it afloat. The sea had gone down a good bit since early morning, but the water was fairly rough yet, rushing up on the starboard side of the wreck nearly to the bows and then retreating to a point about midships. Jack, after calculating upon the work before him, decided that he had no easy job to accomplish. However, as his safety depended on his own exertions he determined to put his shoulder to the wheel without delay. He got a sharp knife out of the galley and after considerable exertion succeeded in freeing the boat from its bonds. Then he shoved the

little craft carefully over the edge of the roof and let it drop on a pile of cordage which broke its fall. It took all his strength and an hour's time to shove the boat to a clear part of the deck against the bulwark where the falls, from which the brig's long-boat had been torn during the storm, swung idly in the air. Attaching the falls to the ring-bolts in the boat, Jack hoisted the boat, each end alternately, above the level of the bulwark. By turning the iron davits outward the boat swung clear of the wreck.

"So far so good," muttered the boy, wiping the perspiration from his face. "That is the hardest job I ever tackled in my life. Now I must load the boat with some provisions from the pantry, a small keg of water, and such other articles as I may figure on that I need for my trip down the coast to the settlement Webb spoke about."

When he got back to the passage he heard Webb moving around in the carpenter's room and swearing like a trooper. The rascal, who was only partially sober, was clearly in a furious humor at finding himself locked in, and Jack could hear him uttering threats about what he would do to the boy when he got out. He pounded furiously on the door, and kicked at it time and again without making any impression on it, but Jack, fearing he might manage to break the door down and get out, and looking for trouble in that event, rushed to his stateroom and secured his revolver. On his way back he heard a great crash, and reached the passage in time to see that Webb had smashed one of the panels with a hatchet he had found in the carpenter's chest. When the rascal saw the boy he hurled a string of imprecations at him, his little bloodshot eyes bulging with rage.

"Just wait till I get out," he roared. "I'll kill you, you young monkey!"

He struck the lock a tremendous blow, smashing it and splintering the woodwork about it. A kick from his foot swung the door open and he rushed at Jack with uplifted hatchet.

"Hold on or I'll shoot!" cried the boy, raising his revolver and covering Webb with it.

Inflamed by the brandy, and apparently reckless of the consequences, the fellow paid no attention to the command. In self-defense Jack was obliged to pull the trigger. There was a flash, a report and Webb went down in a heap in the passage, where he lay perfectly motionless, bleeding from a wound in his head.

## CHAPTER VI.—In the Hands of the Tusk Hunters.

"I hope I haven't killed him," ejaculated Jack, looking down at his fallen enemy. "I don't want to have anyone's blood on my hands. I had to shoot or he'd have laid me out, and self-preservation is the first law of nature."

Examining the rascal's wound he found, to his relief, that the bullet had merely torn the man's scalp and stunned him. He dragged Webb into the steward's room, locked him in there, and rushed his preparations for departure. Inside of half an hour he had the boat fairly loaded with canned goods and other food, a keg of water, and a bottle of brandy which might come in handy in an emergency. He also took possession of a pair of navy revolvers and a bag of cartridges he



found in the captain's room, and stowed them in a covered locker in the bows of the boat, together with a small quantity of English sovereigns and various other things. Then he lowered the boat carefully into the water, which was much calmer now.

As he was all ready to go he slipped into the passage, unlocked the door of the steward's room, where Webb still lay unconscious, left it half open and returned to the deck. Lowering himself down one of the falls, he unshipped the hooks fore and aft, pushed the boat to the stern of the wreck and thence into clear water. Then putting out the oars he rowed off toward the beach. When he got within thirty yards of the shore he turned the boat's head parallel with the coast and headed southward. In fifteen minutes a projection of land shut out the view of the wreck, and he now began to realize that he was utterly alone on an uninhabited stretch of the coast of the dark continent. He had covered several miles of his course, and it was growing dark, when he saw a creek, walled in by rushes, that struck him as a good safe place to put in and pass the night. Accordingly he made for it, and in a short time he reached the head of the inlet, and stepping ashore tied the boat's painter to a tree. Then he ate his evening meal, and turned in among the thick grass near the creek for a good sleep. He anticipated a long and wearisome pull at the oars next day. Jack slept peacefully through the night, but was awakened by a strange noise soon after sunrise. It was the beating of a species of drum close at hand, and was accompanied by odd cries and chantings.

"What the dickens is that?" he asked himself, as he sat up and listened intently. "Must be a bunch of natives raising Cain in this vicinity. I guess I'd better make myself scarce before they catch sight of me, for, according to Webb, the blacks along this part of the coast are not on friendly terms with the whites, and something might happen I wouldn't like."

As he rose out of his grass bed he came face to face with two stalwart blacks, coming directly toward him. Their shiny ebony skins glistened in the rays of the early morning sun, as if coated with varnish, and they would have been wholly naked but for a breech-cloth. It would be hard to say which was the most surprised at the unexpected encounter—Jack or the natives. The latter came to a sudden stop a yard from the boy and gazed at him in great wonder, while Jack returned their stare with interest. The tableau lasted a few seconds and then the blacks uttered a series of sharp cries that speedily brought half a dozen other natives to the spot, one of whom seemed to hold a certain rank above the others, for he wore a long necklace of shark's teeth about his neck and across his broad chest, while a heavy gold bracelet encircled each arm between the shoulder and elbow. Jack thought it was high time to make a move for his boat, which lay hidden in the rushes of the creek only a few yards away. Accordingly he started in an unconcerned way for the spot.

But he did not get far. At a signal from the chap with the necklace and bracelets three natives sprang forward and seized him. At another signal he was forced to accompany the party to the seashore whence came the sound of the drum and chanting. Jack offered no resist-

ance to the high-handed proceeding on the part of the blacks, because he saw that he was quite helpless in their grasp.

A strange scene presently burst on the boy's sight. About twenty natives, each armed with a broad-headed spear, were drawn up in a wide semi-circle on the beach. They stood as solemn and motionless as so many black statues. In the centre of the half-circle stood a singularly attired ebony man, of sixty years at least, supported by two blacks wearing necklaces of gold and beads, and other insignia of rank.

He wore a kind of scarlet and yellow cloth toga that terminated at his knees. A fillet of silk bound his temples, while his neck, arms and ankles were adorned with massive gold necklaces and bracelets, from the former of which hung pendant lumps of rock gold. His sandals were made of red leather, and secured by bands ornamented with vari-colored beads. Altogether his attire was quite imposing, but physically speaking he looked to be on his last legs from some kind of illness. Jack judged him to be a person of consequence among the natives, and he was correct in his surmise. This man was the king of the Gobabis tribe of ivory or tusk hunters, whose head village, or kraal, was situated a hundred or more miles in the interior of Great Namaqua Land, which adjoins Cape of Good Hope on the north.

He had been taken seriously ill with some kind of complaint which had baffled the skill of his medicine man, and as a last resort the royal physician had ordered the king to be carried to the seacoast, where certain rites were now in progress looking to his recovery. Three men with native drums, which they were beating with thick-headed wooden sticks, stood facing the king with their backs to the sea. Just in front of them was the medicine man, a person of enormous stature, who was dressed in a fantastic costume of leopard skins, and whose face and arms were painted in white streaks, that made him look exceedingly weird. He wore sandals, too, but plain ones, and divers golden ornaments.

Circling around the king and the two men who supported him were half a dozen natives, entirely nude, whose black skins were painted with white streaks and circles. A double circle surrounded their eyes and mouths, while a single circle ornamented each cheek. Narrow bandages of red cloth surrounded their thighs, their wrists, and their arms above the elbows. They held above their heads miniature kettle-drums, covered with leopard skin, which gave forth a booming sound as they scraped their wet thumbs across the head. These were the chanters, and their monotonous song filled the air while they kept time and danced to the notes of the three drummers. At the moment Jack was brought on the scene the curious ceremony terminated on a signal from the medicine man. Then he approached the king with great respect and said something to him in his native language. The king replied in a feeble tone, whereupon the medicine man made an announcement to those assembled that the king was much better. A single shout, in which all joined, even Jack's captors, greeted his words.

It was probably the invigorating sea air after the storm which, filling the royal lungs, made the king feel somewhat improved, and not the senseless mummary to which he had been needlessly



subjected. The king was at once borne to the royal litter and placed upon it in an easy attitude against a soft cushion of leopard skins. Then the man with the shark necklace who had assisted in Jack's capture came forward, and kneeling before his royal highness announced the presence of a white prisoner. The king, still drinking in the saline ozone which was doing him a lot of good, ordered Jack to be brought before him. And Jack was brought forthwith. He was ordered by dumb motions to kneel before the king, but Jack had too much of the American spirit in him to kowtow to any man, particularly a black one.

On the spur of the moment Jack saved himself from rough handling by sticking his thumbs in his ears and solemnly wagging his fingers to and fro, at the same time bowing his head a little. This substitute for the other ceremony was accepted by the king as the proper thing in his case. The royal personage asked Jack some question in his own tongue. The boy shook his head to intimate that he did not understand. The king then called on his medicine man to address the prisoner, which he did in a kind of broken Dutch, or as near as he could get to the Boer lingo, but as Jack understood it no better than the king's speech it didn't produce results.

"Can you speak English?" asked Jack.

"Ah, you Engleesh, eh?" said the royal physician, his face lighting up.

Jack nodded.

"Where from you come?"

Jack pointed at the ocean. The medicine man looked puzzled, as if he did not quite understand the boy could have come from the water.

"How dat?"

"Ship," replied the boy.

The man understood at once.

"Where him now?"

Jack pointed north.

"How far?"

"Six miles," hazarded Jack as to the location of the wreck.

"Six mile," repeated the medicine man, who seemed to be figuring out that distance in his head.

Turning to the king he bowed very low and repeated the substance of what he had learned from Jack. The king, who appeared to have greatly improved since the ceremony had been finished, listened attentively. Then calling up one of the blacks who had supported him during the incantation, and who was a high court functionary, he gave him certain directions concerning the prisoner. Five minutes later the boy, in charge of four ordinary natives, under command of the chap with the shark's teeth necklace, started for the interior. Jack didn't want to leave the seashore where his boat was, but his feelings on the subject were not considered. The king had ordered him to be taken to the chief kraal, and what the king said always went with his loyal subjects. Consequently Jack, much against his will, was obliged to step out, and step lively, too, for the natives were tireless walkers.

ahead and one behind, while the boss of the party, who was responsible for the delivery of the prisoner at the village, kept his sharp eyes on his charge more or less all the time. Two minutes after the party left the seashore they found themselves beneath a roof of verdure that was impenetrable to the sun, and pursuing a devious route that might be called a pathway, only it was not marked out as one. Beautifully green was the leafy canopy above their heads, the trees often rising to a height of a hundred feet without a bough or branch; but to make up for this an intricate tracery of cordage sprang from tree to tree, like the chains of a suspension bridge, composed of waxen-leaved creepers, bearing flowers of every conceivable size, shape and hue. It put Jack much in mind of one of the gorgeous scenes in a fairy spectacle he had seen at one of the New York theatres the preceding Christmas.

"If a dozen or two ballet girls were suspended here and there, and colored lights turned on, it would be just like the theatre," he thought as he marched along.

Had he been traveling that way of his own free will the scenic beauties would have greatly impressed him, but under the circumstances he did not enjoy it much. He was wondering what was going to happen to him when he reached the destination to which he and his captors were bound. What that destination was, or how far distant, he had not the faintest idea. For more than an hour they maintained the same rapid pace, and Jack, unused to such a pace, began to show signs of weariness. The scenery continued being the same primeval kind of forest. The voice of nature was still, save for the buzzing of innumerable bush insects. No birds raised their glad songs in the leafy solitudes. No wild beasts, of which there were plenty, showed themselves across their path. But the insects were as gorgeously tinted as the great waxen, faintly-smelling flowers from which they drew their food; and brighter still were the scales of the carpet snakes and the diamond-eyed serpents that glistened every now and then, as they lay coiled around, or hung dangling from the thick cordage of the creepers.

As time passed Jack began to lag in his walk, and the boss of the party began to prod him with his thumb. This availed for a time, but not for long. Seeing that the boy could not keep up with themselves, the man with the sharks'-teeth necklace ordered the natives who walked abreast of Jack to lift him between them on their shoulders. They obeyed, and our hero proceeded more at his physical ease thereafter. Hour after hour went by, and Jack marveled at the wonderful powers of endurance of the black men, who did not seem to be the least tired after the stretch of ground they had already covered. About the hour of noon the party came to a glade or open space in the forest. Here a halt was called for the first time. In the middle of this clearing Jack saw the ashes of a large fire. A number of earthenware vessels stood about the spot, all covered.

The boy wondered what they contained, and why they were there in that solitude. While one of the natives started a small fire by primitive but nevertheless effectual methods, two other blacks uncovered two of the smaller hampers. Another produced a kettle, went to a nearby stream, filled it partially with water, and brought it to the fire. It was suspended over the blaze

## CHAPTER VII.—Carried Into the Interior.

Jack was not tied in any way, but there wasn't any chance of his giving his attendants the slip, for one of them walked close on either side, one



by a tripod. After the water was heated a portion of the contents of one of the hampers was emptied into it. Jack couldn't see what the stuff was, but for the reader's information we will say that it was live snails, which was considered a great delicacy, and had been collected by the king's party during the entire line of march to the seashore. After the snails had been allowed to cook a certain time, handfuls of rice were added to this soup, and the fire stirred up. In half an hour the snail soup was ready for distribution, and Jack was accorded a fair share. The snails proved to be good eating, though they felt rather rubbery before he crunched them between his teeth.

The flavor of the soup itself was somewhat like stewed oysters, and as Jack was very hungry he relished it very much indeed. Before resuming their line of march the kettle and other utensils used were carefully cleaned, and everything was returned to its former position for the subsequent use of the king and his escort on their return to the village. Jack had to walk as long as his strength permitted him to keep pace with his captors, and then he was taken up again on the blacks' shoulders. No pause was made until shortly after dark, when another clearing was reached, and here the party camped for the night, building four fires to keep away the wild animals that always roamed those solitudes during the hours of darkness. Supper consisted merely of some rice cakes and the indigenous fruits plucked from the trees that grew around. The party kept a watch by turns all night long, but if it was on account of their prisoner they might have saved themselves the trouble, for he was so footsore and weary that nothing could have induced him to try to take French leave that night. As soon as he ate what was given him he turned over on the soft verdure, closed his eyes, and in a few minutes was sleeping as peacefully as on the preceding night when, so far as he knew, no unexpected developments hung over his head. It may seem astonishing, but as a matter of fact the party Jack was with covered fifty miles that day, and they were not overtired at that.

A similar space was traversed on the following day up to dark, when the halt was made in the foothills of a chain of mountains for the evening meal on the bank of a long, shallow stream which they had forded with ease. Instead of camping all night after supper, as they had done the night before, bamboo torches were lighted, and the march was resumed through a defile in the range. An hour's travel through the mountains brought the party out into a long and wide valley. Jack saw numerous lights in the distance, and concluded that they were approaching a village. It was the village of Gobabis, the chief kraal of the tribe, where the king resided, and where all the religious rites of the Tusk Hunters were celebrated on stated occasions established by custom at the temple of the goddess Gobabis. One of the blacks was sent on ahead to announce their coming. It took another hour to reach the suburbs of the kraal, during which the repose of the valley seemed undisturbed. Then of a sudden Jack heard a swell of barbaric music in the distance. Gongs, rattles, horns, drums, and other so-called musical instruments began to make the night hideous. And as these sounds drew nearer

they were mingled with laughter, unearthly yells and what seemed like singing. Presently, in turning the corner of a yellow bamboo-walled, green rush-thatched street, the party encountered a crowd of natives, of both sexes, nearly all of them carrying torches. At first glance it might have been mistaken for a torchlight political procession such as one sees in the United States just before election.

Jack's idea was that something very important was going on among the natives of the valley. He did not dream that it had any direct connection with himself. The procession came on, opened out as the prisoner and his captors reached the head of it, and swallowed them up. The crowd of enthusiastic blacks then turned back and marched with greater noise and demonstration than ever to the public square in the centre of the village, which was large enough, Jack thought, to be rated as a town. The procession separated into three parts, one of which filled up one side of the square, another the opposite side, while the third part formed the background facing the fourth side occupied by a large building and its appendages, which was the idol house, for the Tusk Hunters worshiped a gigantic and hideous-looking image called Gobabis, from which the chief tribe took its name. This image occupied the central and two-story section of the temple or house of the idol.

Jack and his captors were left conspicuously alone in the centre of the square, surrounded on three sides by the people with their blazing torches throwing a lurid light all over the immediate neighborhood. At the door or grand entrance to the temple stood the venerable brother of the king, who stood first in authority in the village when his royal relative was away. He was attired in a rich and short toga like his royal highness, but the ornaments on his person were of a much simpler and less valuable character. Beside him stood the high priest of the temple, who was dressed in a long white toga reaching to his sandals, and whose ornaments were plain bands of gold on his arms and wrists, while around his neck was a chain of superb precious stones to which was attached a sort of breastplate of solid, polished gold, set with myriads of diamonds that flashed and scintillated in the light cast by the torches.

On either side of these two ranged a row of ebony beauties, whose ages ran from twelve to twenty, and they were dressed in white frocks, with gold circlets and bracelets on their bare arms, and strings of different colored beads about their necks. It seemed to Jack as if he and his captors were being accorded a royal reception, but that was because he didn't know any better. Like the decorated calf marked for sacrifice, who plays with the flowers that designates its fate to every one but itself, Jack to a certain extent was interested and amused by the scene about him. It was certainly a new and novel scene to his young eyes. The nearest approach to such a scene, he had viewed in some stage spectacle at a big New York theatre, but there were elements of realism in this picture that no stage manager could supply, and a scenic background that no theatre could furnish. Had Jack been fettered, or threatened, or ill treated by his captors he would have approached the temple with many misgivings as to what fate had in store for him; but as noth-



ing had so far happened to him beyond a curtailment of liberty of action, he did not expect that anything serious was in prospect. The moment was approaching, however, when his confidence was to receive a rude jolt, which would awaken him to the stern reality of the situation.

#### CHAPTER VIII.—Fact to Face with a Terrible Fate.

When Jack and his captors arrived within a couple of yards of the spot where stood the king's brother and the chief priest of the idol house, all but the young American prostrated themselves humbly before the two black men. Jack alone stood erect, and instinctively a defiant smile wreathed his lips as he looked curiously at the pair of ebony individuals who seemed to be the great moguls of the village. When the crowd gathered on the three sides of the square saw that the prisoner did not humble himself before their great men, a low and prolonged murmur of surprise and disapprobation rose from the multitude and they swung their torches to and fro. No effort, however, was made to compel Jack to bow the knee.

The king's brother beckoned him forward. The boy advanced a yard in front of his conductors, who rose to their feet again. As if in response to some signal, a small black man, partially clad in European garments, appeared and placed himself beside Jack. He was the royal interpreter, and the prisoner found that he spoke very good English. Through this man Jack was questioned as to how he happened to be in Great Namaqua Land, and what had brought him there. The young American told the interpreter his name, his nationality, and how he had left the United States on a sea voyage for his health, bound for Cape Town.

He then explained how the brig had been caught in a violent storm and wrecked on the coast near where he had been captured by the black men. All of the above was duly translated to the king's brother and high priest. The interpreter then explained to Jack that he was in the country of the Gobabis, or Tusk Hunters. That his coming had been foretold by the great goddess Gobabis, who designated him and a white girl captured a few days since to be offered as a special sacrifice for the recovery of the king from his illness. The ceremony, which involved the death of the two young whites on the altar of the goddess would take place immediately on the return of the king from the seashore. The girl was already confined in a section of the idol, and he would be placed in an adjoining one. The interpreter assured Jack that both he and the girl had been accorded a high honor by the goddess, in consideration of which fact they would be treated to the fat of the land until the hour arrived for the sacrificial ceremonies.

To say that Jack was startled by the interpreter's communication, made with all the solemnity that the conditions demanded, would but mildly express the boy's feelings. His utter helplessness in the midst of a strange and fanatical people, and a long distance from Christian civilization, fully impressed itself on Jack. All he had ever read about the mysterious religious rites

and weird customs of certain people living in various parts of the Dark Continent, flashed with appalling vividness across his mind at that strenuous moment. As he entertained a strong personal objection to taking such a conspicuous part in an absurd sacrificial ceremonial he put up a big kick to the interpreter. The man, however, pretended to be astonished that he should entertain the least objection to the part assigned to him by the goddess. He earnestly advised Jack not to show any signs of dissatisfaction lest the goddess change her mind, and order him to be disposed of in a less honorable and more painful way.

The interpreter proceeded to explain that to be disemboweled alive on the great altar, and his heart and liver consumed by the sacred fire, showed the distinguished consideration that the goddess entertained for both him and the girl who was to share the ceremony with him.

"Your spirits will be inhaled by the Great Gobabis, and you will become a part of herself," said the interpreter in a tone that implied he was imparting the most blissful intelligence which Jack ought to receive with great joy.

Such a feeling was very far from the boy at that moment. It was with a sense of horror that he viewed his approaching fate. He wondered what would be more painful or horrible than being disemboweled alive. Well, there were several things practiced by the religious executioners of the Gobabis to turn their victims into fetishes, that carried more lingering torture in their train, for instance, sometimes a man or woman was bound naked at night to a post in the mountains and abandoned to the hungry jackals, who took advantage of their helplessness to feed upon them leisurely, generally beginning with their lower limbs. As the beasts tore mouthfuls of quivering flesh away from the bones to satisfy their ravenous appetites the victims suffered the quintessence of human agony. Another method that was occasionally adopted, when a number of common victims were on hand, and which was greatly enjoyed by the inhabitants of the village, was the driving in about the square naked men and women, whose noses and ears had been previously sliced off, and whose cheeks had been pierced by long iron skewers, to which their lips were noosed in the shape of the figure eight. Their nude bodies were then made the mark for hundreds of prickly pears, cast at them by the on-lookers, each one of which, as it struck the flesh, must have caused acute agony.

These tortures, however, were allotted only to those for whom the goddess was understood to have no interest. To Jack and his unknown female companion in misfortune were accorded the highest of all sacrificial honors, that of yielding up their young lives on the great altar of Gobabis according to the accepted formula as described. After the interpreter had withdrawn, the young American was immediately marched inside the building, and into the presence of the gigantic wooden idol, which was hollow on the inside. This figure was so large that it practically formed the whole of the central part of the idol house.

Its head rose above the surrounding green roofs, and the two holes that stood for eyes were lighted up at night with red lanterns, while green lanterns marked the grinning mouth, and two white



Lights close together indicated the nostrils. The inhabitants of Great Namaqua Land believed that their deity never slept, night or day, but kept perpetual watch over, and protected, them. Jack's conductors opened a cunningly-contrived door in the base of the idol, and led the boy inside, where everything was as dark as the fabled cave of Erebus. He was pushed across the rough, uneven floor, and up what seemed to be a wooden step-ladder, through a trapdoor into a room, in the stomach of the idol, which was lighted at that moment by the pale rays of the full moon shining through a small square open window, ten feet from the floor.

Here Jack was left alone, his conductors retiring by the way they had come. Jack heard a bolt shoot in the trap-door after they had disappeared, and he had no doubt but he was safely locked in the small apartment. Hardly a sound reached the boy's ears now, as the inhabitants of the village had quietly dispersed to their huts after his disappearance within the temple.

"This is a pretty pickle I'm in," he muttered almost despairingly, for the outlook seemed very black indeed to him at that moment. "To be cut open alive on the great altar outside, along with some unfortunate white girl confined in this place with me, as soon as the king of this nation returns to the village. I wonder who the poor girl is that's slated to suffer with me, and how she came to fall into the hands of these fanatical people? Who would have thought a few days ago that I should be placed in such a terrible situation? It seems like an ugly nightmare. I can hardly believe I'm not dreaming it all. Yet there seems to be no doubt but that I'm wide awake. Well, there's one satisfaction, I've got my revolver with me. If all hope fails me I can at least shoot myself at the last moment, and save myself the torture of that terrible ceremony. And I can shoot the girl, too, if she's within reach of a bullet."

While communing with himself Jack had been standing where his conductors had left him. He now bethought himself of examining his prison. First he tried the trap-door and found, as he supposed, that it was fastened underneath. To reach the window above appeared to be impossible, for the walls were of some varnished compound that afforded not the slightest foothold, curved, dome-like, outward beneath the window, doubtless to form one of the immense bosoms of the idol, which seemed to indicate that it was meant to represent a female divinity.

A partition divided the chest of the great figure apparently in two equal parts, and in the compartment on the other side Jack was satisfied the white girl prisoner was confined. As Jack looked at the partition a strong desire to meet the poor girl on the other side of it took possession of him. In spite of the hopelessness of his own situation a great sympathy for the helpless stranger filled his heart. Her condition seemed to be even more desperate than his own. He at least could put up a fight, however futile, for his life; but what could a poor, weak girl do but be led like a lamb to slaughter?

The thought of what her despair must be at that moment nerved him to action. He pounded on the partition, first with the idea of attracting her attention, and then for the purpose of ascertaining what the wall was composed of, and whether there was a secret door anywhere in its

surface. While he had already ascertained that the rotund figure of the idol was made of hard, polished wood, capable of considerable resistance, he found that the partition was made of different material, like plaster. In reality it was built of osier twigs and dried mud, a substance largely used in the construction of the better class houses in the village. The idol had stood so long that this wall was very brittle, and a small battering-ram in the hands of two strong men would have made short work of it.

Jack had nothing more effective than the butt of his revolver to batter it with, and he did not consider that would make any impression on it. So, instead of wasting time trying it he got out his strong jackknife, sprung open the blade and began to hack at the wall. To his great satisfaction the substance began coming away in chunks, and he soon had quite a hole bored in the partition. He kept on resolutely, and after he had dug in about a foot the blade of the knife went through on the other side. He rapidly widened the hole and then peered through. Nothing but an opaque darkness met his eye. He called out several times to attract the other prisoner's attention, but received no reply.

"The poor thing is asleep," he said to himself. "I must keep on until I can make the hole large enough to crawl through."

He worked rapidly and with some enthusiasm, and the labor took his thought off his forlorn situation. At length the hole was large enough for him to shove his head and shoulders through, which he did. To his surprise he saw no duplicate window open to the moonlight, as was the case with his own prison. The place was dark as pitch.

"Gee! That's funny. I could have sworn this other compartment was the counterpart of the one where I am. Seems to me it ought to be. Well, I must make my way through, anyway, and see if the poor girl is in there."

After muttering those words Jack resumed his work on the wall and presently a kick from his shoe pushed in a large piece of the wall, so that he was enabled to squeeze himself through. Taking out his match-safe he struck a lucifer. When the light flared up he found to his astonishment that he wasn't in the next room at all, but in a narrow passage between the two rooms.

## CHAPTER IX.—A Plucky Girl.

"So I've had all my work for nothing, at least so far as reaching the girl is concerned," he said, striking a second match. "Maybe this passage might offer me an avenue of escape from the idol. If it does I'll see that the girl goes with me. No real American boy would desert a helpless girl to such a fate as faces this one as long as he could move a finger in her behalf."

With that chivalrous and unselfish resolve in his heart Jack proceeded to explore the passage by matchlight. He soon found a ladder leading upward. He ascended it and pushing his way through an uncovered trap landed in the head of the idol. There he saw the green lanterns burning in the curved and narrow slit that represented the divinity's mouth; the two white lights that flashed through the nostril holes, and



the red lights above, reached by two short ladders, that illuminated the eyes.

"Well, to think that any people could be so thick-headed as to be deceived by such a bogus arrangement as this. I'll bet the priest and his assistants who are running this image are simply playing the inhabitants, and the king as well, for all they are worth. Surely they themselves can't have any faith in a wooden statue that they have to illuminate in order to demonstrate that it's alive."

That's the way Jack argued as he stood in the head of the image and examined its internal architecture and the arrangements for hoodwinking the credulous worshipers. Jack climbed one of the ladders and looked out through the great eye. Below him lay the public square and a large part of the houses composing the village. Not a light was visible anywhere, nor was the stillness broken by a sound. Beyond spread out the green and fertile valley up to the foothills, with the imposing mountain range, rising peak on peak, forming the background to the picture, the while illuminated by the moon, that hung like a burnished silver ball in the deep blue, star-bedecked sky. It was a scene well worth going miles to view, but not under such circumstances as Jack looked upon it. However, that picture was never effaced from his memory. In after years, when safe and happy in America, he saw it in his dreams.

In spite of the perilous situation in which he stood, the beauty of that view held the boy entranced many minutes. At length, conscious that precious moments were passing by, he descended the short ladder, and then the longer one to the passage below. Another uncovered trap showed a ladder leading to the ground floor, and down this Jack went. Here he found himself in another passage with two doorways, covered with cloth draperies, leading off at either side. Pushing aside the one on the right he entered a room the size of the apartment in which he had been imprisoned. It was directly under the section of the idol where he supposed the girl to be confined. A long ladder led up to a trap-door in the ceiling.

"By George!" cried Jack with renewed animation, "I'll bet that ladder will let me up into the compartment that's the duplicate of the one I was in. All I'll have to do will be to shoot the bolt. That's easier than spending time and energy in breaking down the second wall upstairs that I calculated on having to do in order to reach the girl."

Jack immediately sprang up the ladder, found the bolt shot as he expected, opened it, threw back the trap-door and stepped into the moonlit room with the small window and bulging wall beneath it. Looking around Jack saw a female form stretched upon a couch of soft material similar to the one provided for himself in the other room. Walking over, he touched the motionless object on the arm. With a smothered cry the sleeper started up and gazed at him in a kind of dazed bewilderment. The moonlight shone full on her face and Jack at a glance saw that she was a lovely-looking girl of perhaps seventeen years.

"Don't be alarmed, miss," he said in reassuring tones, without considering whether she would understand his language; "I've come to save you."

"Save me!" she exclaimed in pure English. "Save me!" she repeated, holding back the hair

from her face and gazing at him in undisguised wonder. "Who are you?"

"I am Jack Cleveland, an American boy, and I will rescue you from the fate you face or die in the attempt."

"I, too, am an American," she said. "My name is Ada Ward. How came you to be here?"

"That is too long a story to tell you now. All I can say is that I was captured yesterday morning on the seacoast by some of the black rascals who inhabit this village. I was to share the same fate as yourself. But I hope to escape while the chance offers, and I am going to take you with me. If we should be overtaken we must die together. I will shoot you and then myself, for we must never participate in the horrible sacrifice for which we have been chosen. Come, now, let us go. Not a word of further explanation until we are clear of the village, if we are so fortunate as to be able to leave it alive."

"I understand you," the girl answered with wonderful composure, "and I thank you from my heart for your generous efforts in my behalf. Go on, I will follow. Be not afraid that I will flinch if peril overtakes us. I am the daughter of a colonel in the American army, and my ancestors shed their blood in the Revolutionary War. I hope I am worthy of the name I bear. At least I shall not disgrace it in the hour of danger."

Jack looked at her in undisguised admiration. This girl was no weakling, for courage and resolution shone in her eyes. Clearly the blood of heroes ran in her veins, and instinctively the boy took off his hat to her, both literally and metaphorically.

"I'm glad to see that you're made of the right stuff, Miss Ward," he said. "If we get half a chance I'm willing to believe that we'll get off. You're just the kind of girl I admire, and if need be I'll go through fire and water to save you."

He turned away and descended the ladder. The girl followed him at once, and was close behind him when he stepped on the ground floor. Drawing his revolver, Jack stepped into the passage and cautiously walked to the rear end, where his sharp eyes made out an open doorway, with the moonlit landscape beyond. Not a human being was in sight. Such a thing as guards about the idol house was not considered necessary, as no inhabitant ever approached nearer the temple than one hundred feet. A terrible fate would have overtaken any native who was caught within the dead-line, as it might be called, and which was plainly marked by red paint. Thus the priests protected the secrets of the temple, and maintained their acknowledged supremacy over the ignorant multitude. How they drew the wool over the eyes of the king and his personal court was another matter that they were clever enough to get around.

"I'm sorry the moon is out so bright tonight, Miss Ward," said Jack. "It makes our escape from the village all the more difficult."

"Yes," she replied, "it's a handicap, but we must hope for the best."

"I don't see any one about, so we had better make a start. We must make for that green wall yonder. It will shade us from the moon's rays, and the further we get from the temple the safer we will be."

Thus speaking, Jack stepped out into the moon-



light and Ada Ward followed, keeping close beside him. Swiftly they crossed the brilliantly illuminated court behind the temple and were soon hastening along in the shadow of the leafy wall. As there were no signs of an alarm, they were satisfied their exit from the idol house had not been observed and their courage rose in consequence. Still, they were only at the beginning of their desperate flight from the Tusk Hunters' village. Hope hung in their minds only by a slender thread. They dared hardly think what the future held for them.

#### CHAPTER X.—The Flight From the Village.

The green lane took them into a long village street, the same one where the procession had met Jack and his captors that evening and then escorted them to the public square. This street led straight to the defile in the mountains, and that was the point the boy and his fair companion were aiming for. The street, however, was moonlit from end to end, with never a bit of shade to cover their retreat. It seemed improbable that they could traverse it without attracting attention. Yet they had to make the attempt. No other avenue offered as direct a course, and as far as the moonlight went, all were more or less illuminated, and offered the same chances of detection.

"We'll have to take our chances, Miss Ward," said Jack. "We can't remain here. Time is everything with us now. We must reach the defile as soon as possible and then trust to luck to get clear off."

They took the middle of the road, and though Jack was dead tired after his day's exertions he stepped out like a little major, for his life, and the life of his companion, depended on their getting out of the village, and as far from it as they could, before their escape was discovered. Of course they would be immediately pursued by men whose tireless locomotive powers Jack had abundant evidence of. But he knew once they had gained the open country, to catch them would be like hunting for a needle in a haystack, unless their enemies were exceptionally good trailers, and enough of them engaged in the hunt.

As silent as shadows they passed down the street, expecting at any moment to hear a hue and cry raised behind them. Nothing of the sort happened, and they reached and passed the last house in the village outskirts with thankful hearts. They had still a considerable stretch of level, tree-covered ground to cover before they could enter the defile, but the chance of their retreat being interrupted now was small in comparison to what it was while they were within the limits of the village itself. Neither felt inclined to talk as yet—the tension was too great on their nerves as long as the thatched roofs of the houses remained in sight and they could make out in the distance the red eyes of the goddess Gobabis. At last they reached the entrance to the defile, and here they paused from sheer exhaustion, Jack being utterly done up.

"It doesn't seem as if I could go a step farther even to save my life," he said to the girl, who, having rested all day in her prison, was the brightest of the two at this moment.

"Well, we can rest here in safety a little while I think," she replied. "Though it is true we have the village in full view from this elevation."

"While we are resting will you tell me how you got into the power of those Tusk Hunters, as I understand they are called."

"Certainly," she replied; "but that you may understand my story rightly it will be necessary to explain how I, a resident of the city of New York, happen to be in the wilds of South Africa."

It is unnecessary that we should follow Miss Ward through her narrative which took her more than an hour to tell while the two young people, so strangely thrown together, sat at the mouth of the defile and gathered strength enough to resume their flight.

Being a motherless girl, and living with an aunt in New York while her father was stationed in the Philippines, at the time when the American forces there were engaged in the dangerous and troublesome duty of subduing the natives opposed to United States occupation, she decided to accept the invitation of another aunt, who had married a British subject, and settled in Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope, to visit South Africa. She had been three months at her aunt's home, and was thinking about returning to the United States when an opportunity was afforded her to visit an ostrich farm in the northern part of the district. She accepted the invitation and went to the farm, which was nearly 400 miles from Cape Town.

Here she spent two delightful weeks and was preparing to go back to Cape Town with the party who had escorted her to the farm, when she was surprised alone in a patch of woods by a party of natives, who proved to be Tusk Hunters, returning from the coast after bringing a load of ivory to a trading post. They gagged and bound her, and put her into the cart they had with them, which was drawn by oxen, and carried her to a small village across the borderline into Great Namaqua Land. Here she was kept under the charge of the chief women of the tribe for two days, and then, accompanied by a retinue of females, was sent on to the chief village of Gobabis, where she arrived two days ago.

Here she was informed that her arrival was foretold by the goddess, and that she had been specially selected as a human sacrifice in order to facilitate the recovery of the king from a serious illness. She was told that the honor conferred upon her of being offered up on the altar of the goddess was something she ought to appreciate, as a similar sacrifice had not taken place in several years, and was only put in force on occasions of great emergency like the present, when the king's life was in danger.

She was treated with great consideration, and had everything she wanted except her liberty. The sacrificial method had not been explained to her as it was to Jack by the interpreter, and she was therefore ignorant of the horrible ceremony which had confronted her. Jack, however, told her what they had both escaped, and said that was the reason why he was resolved on shooting her and himself in the event of their recapture becoming inevitable. For the first time, the girl's nerve was shaken, and she almost collapsed as the horror of the thing impressed itself upon her.

"Don't give way, Miss Ward," said Jack, put-



ting his arm around her. "I will protect you with my life and save you if it is possible."

"You are a brave and noble boy," she said, throwing her arms around his neck and kissing him in an impulsive way. "I know you will do all you can for me, and I am deeply grateful to you. Should we escape I shall never, never forget what I owe you."

"I consider that it is my duty to protect you to the extent of my power. You may rely on me to the last. Come, now, I think we had better push on till we can find some spot where we can get a good, long rest under conditions that promise some kind of temporary security, at least."

Taking a last look at the Tusk Hunters' village, which slept peacefully under the declining rays of the moon, they struck through the defile as rapidly as possible. It took them an hour and a half to reach the shallow stream, forded by Jack and his captors the evening before. Here they paused for another rest, and then, lest their enemies would be able to track their footsteps in the dust of the long mountain road, Jack said that it would be advisable for them to take to the stream, where they would leave no tracks. Gathering as large a supply of fruit from the trees at this point as they thought they could carry, and removing their shoes and stockings, they entered the stream and turned their faces down the narrow river, which ran south-westward.

They kept steadily on their way till sometime after sunrise, when Jack spied a dense mass of bushes on the side of the mountain. As they were so wearied that they could scarcely go much farther anyway, he decided to use the bushes as a place of concealment. The ground being rocky all the way up to the spot, they would not leave any tracks betraying the fact that they had left the stream at that point. On reaching the bushes they discovered that the thick shrubbery concealed a dark-looking cave, the depths of which they could not judge even after Jack had lighted a match and walked back some distance.

It seemed to lead back straight through the mountains. Jack made out a shelf about twenty feet high, and, believing it would afford an excellent roosting place for them while they remained in the cave, and perhaps save them from discovery in the event that their enemies entered the place in search of them, he pointed it out to the girl and told her that he would help her up there. She was quite satisfied to go anywhere that her plucky young protector suggested, and inside of fifteen minutes both of them were sleeping the sleep of utter weariness on the rocky shelf.

## CHAPTER XI.—Attacked in the Cave.

The village of Gobabis awoke with one accord at sunrise, and the women folk began to prepare the morning meal for their households.

One of the under priests of the temple, whose duty it was to go up into the head and extinguish the lights in the lanterns, discovered the hole in the wall of the passage made by Jack Cleveland.

Squeezing himself into the room where the prisoner had been left he found that it was empty.

He hurried to the quarters of the chief priest and gave the alarm. The investigation that follow-

ed disclosed the flight of the girl, too. This raised a terrible hullabaloo. The king's brother was notified, and inside of a short time a strong party of natives was scouring the outskirts of the village, with orders to extend their search into the mountains, particularly in the direction of the pass.

A second party was sent up the valley, and a third party in the opposite direction, while a fourth was sent across the valley toward the second chain of mountains. No stone was left unturned to recapture the fugitives, for the head priest represented that some dreadful calamity would be visited on the village by the goddess if her victims got clear off.

While all this was going on Jack and Ada slept peacefully in the mountain cave, dreaming possibly of their homes in America. The sun climbed up into the sky and passed the meridian and still they slumbered on, like two weary children.

The afternoon passed away and five o'clock came. Then Jack woke up, feeling like a new boy. He proceeded to make a meal of the fruit they had gathered the night before, and while he was eating, Ada opened her eyes and sat up.

"Help yourself, Miss Ward," he said, pushing one of the bundles toward her.

"Thank you," she answered sweetly. "But don't call me Miss Ward. Call me Ada. We are comrades in misfortune, and it seems almost as if I had known you for a long time instead of only a few hours. At any rate, we should not stand on ceremony now."

"All right, and you must call me Jack."

"Of course," she replied with a smile.

"I wonder what the Tusk Hunters are doing about this time?" he said.

"I don't care what they are doing, as long as they don't track us here," she replied.

"I wish you had a revolver, too," said Jack. "Then we'd be able to make things quite lively for any party that overtook us."

"I wish I had, for I can shoot some."

Jack took advantage of the opportunity to tell the girl how he came to be in Africa himself, concluding his narrative with the wreck of the brig.

"I wonder what time it is? It's so dark in here that it's impossible to say whether night has come around again or not. We must have slept a good while, for I feel like a top again. I wouldn't be surprised if it was after dark."

Finally Jack said he was going to the mouth of the cave to look out. He was about to descend from the shelf when Ada caught him by the arm.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"I thought I heard a noise near the entrance."

Jack deferred getting down for the present, and both listened attentively. Clearly there was a sound among the bushes outside. Jack stretched himself out at full length and peered over the edge of the shelf in the direction of the entrance. Presently he saw a shadowy figure spring into the cave, followed by a second, a third and a fourth. That they were natives on their track could scarcely be doubted.

"We must be silent for our lives," Jack whispered in the girl's ear.

Their eyes were so accustomed to the gloom that they plainly saw the figures advance into the cave, groping their way forward. The black stopped



and held a consultation. Then they returned to the entrance again and the fugitives hoped they were about to leave. They were disappointed, however, for instead of departing they were joined by others. They all gathered just inside the mouth of the cave, and one of the natives proceeded to make a fire. This took time, but at length half a dozen torches were ignited and the party advanced into the cave again.

There were eight of them in all, fine, strapping blacks, with glistening skin and teeth that would have been the envy of a civilized lady. They passed under the rocky shelf, waving their torches to and fro, and finally disappeared into the bowels of the earth. Jack and Ada waited impatiently for them to come back, but they didn't.

"This must be a pretty long cave, or something is keeping them back yonder," said Jack at length. "I don't hear a sound from them."

An hour passed and Jack was getting uneasy when they heard more noise at the entrance and more figures came into the cave. They stopped, and soon the fugitives saw lights begin to flicker. Then the new party came forward with lanterns, similar to those used in the temple, in their hands. One of the party did not seem to be a black man, and was dressed in trousers, shirt, coat and hat. He was short in stature and somewhat thin. As the party drew near the shelf the boy gave a gasp of surprise. The person in the European attire was Noah Webb, and he seemed to be the boss of the bunch. He talked to and ordered them around in their native lingo. He cocked his eye up at the shelf as they came up with it and called a halt. He said something to one of the natives and the fellow sprang up the projections in the wall before Jack and Ada knew what was going to happen. Their hearts jumped into their throats as his head appeared above the edge of the rock.

Although they saw him clearly enough he did not seem to see them. He called down to Webb and was going to descend when the rascal stopped him and handed up a lantern. The black flashed its light on the shelf and, of course, saw the fugitives at once. He gave a cry of triumph and jumped up to grab Jack. There was the flash and report of a revolver, and with a death howl on his lips the Tusk Hunter lost his balance and tumbled down among his companions, where he squirmed and clawed at the ground.

"It's all up with us, I fear," said Jack to the girl. "At any rate, I'll sell our lives as dearly as possible. There's one thing I can't understand, and that is the person in charge of this bunch is the rascally chap I told you we picked up at sea a few days before the brig was wrecked on the coast. He seems to be right in with these fellows, for he talks to them in their own tongue."

At that point Noah Webb called out in English.

"Better come down and give yourselves up, for you can't get away. I'll see that nothing happens to you," he said persuasively.

Jack looked down at the party below.

"So you're there, Noah Webb?"

"Yes, I'm here," grinned the scoundrel.

"What are you doing in the company of those natives?"

"Come down and I'll tell you all about it."

"Sorry, but we can't afford to take any chances."

"You're not takin' any chances as long as I'm

around. I'll protect you and the girl with you."

"No," replied Jack in a determined tone, "I'm going to protect myself and the girl, too, as long as I can, and then you and your crowd can have what's left of us."

"You can't avoid capture, for we've got you trapped. If you do any more shootin' I won't be able to save you. Better give up and come down peaceably."

"We won't come down. If you want us you'll have to come and take us," replied the boy defiantly.

Jack's answer nettled Webb. Suddenly he thrust his hand into his shirt, drew out a revolver and fired hastily at the boy. The ball whistled by Jack's ears.

The fellow's treacherous action, though quite in keeping with his past record, made the boy mad. He raised his revolver and fired back. Webb tried to avoid the shot, but it caught him in the shoulder blade and he uttered a terrible roar, his revolver dropping from his fingers. Then, holding his wounded shoulder, he ordered the blacks to storm the shelf and capture the fugitives at all cost. The natives obeyed his order and began swarming up the wall.

## CHAPTER XII.—In Which Jack Finds a Diamond Mine.

Jack planted himself in front of Ada and fired three shots in rapid succession at as many blacks. Every bullet took effect and they went tumbling back on the floor with cries of pain. Two more of the natives stopped and then retreated of their own accord.

Jack took advantage of the chance to refill the chambers of his revolver with fresh cartridges from his pocket. Then he stood and awaited the next move on the part of their enemies. They appeared to be in no hurry to renew the attack, as their reception had been too warm to suit them. Out of the party of nine only four of the natives had not suffered some injury. Webb was nursing his wounded shoulder, one of the Tusk Hunters, the first man who had attacked Jack, was dead, and three others were more or less badly hurt.

The boy determined to put them to rout if he could while they were demoralized, so he opened fire on the uninjured chaps, aiming at their legs.

Two went down like ninepins, and all the others capable of moving started for the entrance of the cave, leaving their lanterns on the floor. Webb followed them in a hurry, forgetting to pick up his revolver. Jack resolved to get possession of it for Ada, so he slipped down and picked it up. He also carried back one of the lanterns with him, in order to throw a light down from the shelf in the event of another attack, which, however, he did not anticipate right away. As soon as he regained the shelf he handed Webb's revolver to Ada.

"There," he said, "you'll be able to take a hand in the next scrimmage. This bunch seems to have had all they want. They won't attack us again, as only two of them are unwounded. One of them will probably go and hunt up reinforcements, while Webb and the other four who got



back to the entrance, will try and keep us from leaving the cave."

The light of the lantern illuminated the face of the rock at the back of the shelf, and showed an opening there which Ada was first to notice. She called Jack's attention to it. He grabbed the lantern and flashed the light inside.

"It's a passage in the rock leading somewhere," he said. "I think we had better retreat into it, for we could not hold off a large force of the blacks if they attacked us on the shelf. Only one of them could enter this passage at a time, and we could do them up singly as long as our bullets held out."

Jack decided to see where the passage led to.

With the lantern in his hand he started ahead, followed by the girl. After proceeding a hundred feet there still seemed to be no end to it. They followed the many windings of the passage for two hundred feet more, when they came to another opening which let them out into a tunnel.

This was really the continuation of the cave, down which the first party of blacks had gone, and whose return Jack and Ada had looked for in vain, but the two fugitives did not know it.

"I'm afraid we're going right into the mountain," said the girl after they had followed the tunnel a bit.

"Well, what's the odds?" replied Jack. "I don't see any chance of our leaving the cave for some time, so we might as well see how far this tunnel goes."

Fifty feet more brought them to a sharp turn, and then to their great joy they saw the light of day right ahead of them, shining through a large opening.

"That must be a defile in the range," said Jack. "We're in great luck. Now we can give Webb and his black crowd the slip while they think they have us cooped up. Before they discover their mistake we'll be out of their reach."

They emerged into a gorge carpeted with green verdure and thickly dotted with trees. Jack threw the rude lantern away and he and Ada hustled forward. The gorge widened into a small valley covered with vegetation interspersed with many trees. On both sides of them rose the mountain heights, peak on peak.

It was quite dark by the time they reached the end of the valley and entered another defile. They had no intention of pausing as long as they could make any headway at all, so they plunged ahead without regard to natural obstacles. Myriads of stars came out and lighted them on their way. Sometimes they ascended steep paths on the mountain side and sometimes they descended similar ones. When they grew tired they stopped to rest, talk and get better acquainted with each other.

Jack thought they were working southward in the direction they had followed after leaving the defile that led to Gobabis village, but they were actually going due west now, toward the coast. After traversing many miles of the trackless range they came to another cave which looked so inviting that they decided to finish the night there.

Jack watched while the girl slept with his shoulder for a pillow. He awoke her at sunrise, and she kept watch while he slept for about two hours. They ate the rest of their fruit for breakfast and resumed their retreat. They traveled all that day with nothing more to eat, though

they slaked their thirst several times at clear mountain streams. They saw no signs of their pursuers, and hoped they had thrown the Tusk Hunters off their track.

About dark they entered another long and narrow valley, and the first thing they saw was a bunch of fruit trees similar to those from which they had plucked the fruit outside of the pass leading to the village. They halted and had supper, such as it was, and then after gathering as much of the fruit as they could carry, they resumed their journey at a leisurely pace.

They traveled nearly all night again, and morning found them some way up the mountains. Coming to a thick bunch of bushes, they crawled into the patch and were soon sound asleep in the African solitude. The sun was up when they awoke, and after another meal of fruit they resumed their way through the mountains. Nothing happened to break the monotony of their journey till about noon, when the course they were following carried them to the outside of the range and they saw a large village in the distance, which Jack said was probably another of the kraals of the Tusk Hunters. For the balance of the afternoon they kept a sharp watch for any stray native, or party of natives, in that vicinity. At sundown they reached another valley which appeared to mark the end of the mountain range in that direction, and they camped by a small stream and finished their supply of fruit.

"We'll have easier traveling today," said Jack next morning, "for our way lies across this big valley. The chief drawback that confronts us now is to find something to eat. These bushes are loaded with luscious-looking berries, but whether it is safe to eat them is a question."

As they were very hungry and the berries looked good they decided to sample them, with the result that, finding them very palatable, they filled up on them. The valley was covered with trees and high vegetation, but walking was easy, so they made very fair progress. About noon they suddenly came upon a solitary hut in a small clearing. As there did not appear to be anybody about they looked in at the open door. The place showed many signs of occupancy.

"I wonder if there is anything to eat on the premises," said Jack, who, in common with his fair companion, was very hungry again, for they had met with no fruit trees so far in the valley. "Let's investigate."

They entered and the boy presently uttered an exclamation of satisfaction on discovering a big bowlful of boiled rice, together with a basket loaded with different kinds of luscious fruits.

"We'll appropriate this, for I guess we need it worse than the occupant of the hut, who no doubt can easily find more, while the chances are all against us."

They also found a species of cake made from some kind of maize. Putting the bowl of rice and the cake into the basket along with the fruit, they grabbed the handles of the basket between them and left the hut as speedily as possible, for they did not want to be discovered there by the inhabitant. After walking a half a mile they sat down and made a meal off a portion of their provender. The food lasted them for two days, by which time they were drawing near the coast, though they were not aware of the fact. On the third day after leaving the hut



they stopped in a picturesque glade to finish the last of the rice and the fruit.

"What are those things yonder?" asked Ada, as they were resting after their frugal meal, pointing at three curious-looking objects on the ground a few yards away. Jack got up and walked over to examine them.

"Why, they're elephant's tusks," he said. "Ivory in the rough. If we had any means of carrying them away they'd be worth something to us."

Jack lifted one of the tusks and found it very heavy. As he dropped it he saw a small excavation in the ground at his feet. There were a number of odd-looking stone-like substances in it about the size of pebbles, lying in some blue clay in which there was an indentation. One of them gave off a scintillating light, as though studded with bits of mirror-glass. Jack picked it up and examined it intently.

"Come here, Ada," he said excitedly. "I've found a large diamond in the rough."

The girl came over and looked at it.

"Are you sure it's a diamond?" she asked.

"Positive. Professor Casey, under whose guardianship I made the voyage to this country, and who perished with the rest of the brig's company on the wreck, explained the whole diamond industry to me. I can tell a rough diamond when I see it as good as anybody, but the matrix or covering of this one is so much rubbed off that almost anybody would suspect it to be a diamond. See how it flashes in different places. I'll bet this diamond after cutting would be worth a whole lot of money. I wonder if there are any more specimens in this hole? Yes, I can see several even from here. Maybe we've struck a real diamond mine."

As Jack and Ada stood gazing at the hole containing the rough diamonds, a rustling among the bushes startled them. Looking up, they saw that they were surrounded by a crowd of Kaffirs, two of whom threatened them with their spears.

### CHAPTER XIII.—Diamonds to Burn

Jack and his companion were taken completely by surprise, and before either could draw their revolver the ugly-looking spears of the two foremost blacks were pressed against their breasts, while a dozen other natives, similarly armed, quickly surrounded them. Towering above the party, on the edge of the bushes, was a majestic-looking man of middle age mounted upon an elephant. Without the slightest chance to defend themselves the game seemed to be up at last for the two fugitives. At the critical moment a terrible roar filled the glade. Something big and tawny came through the air like a meteor, sweeping Jack and the girl to the ground like the passing of a tornado and landing on the two blacks who held the spears.

Cries of consternation and terror went up from the other natives, who instantly turned and fled from the clearing as fast as they could go, leaving their two companions struggling in the grasp of a huge African lion—one of the largest of his species.

The man on the elephant seemed anxious to get away in a hurry, too, for he jabbed an iron-pointed implement he held in his hand into the

hide of the unwieldy animal, and shouted out some command to him. The lion paid no attention to either him or his elephant, but there was trouble in store for him just the same. A large lioness, who had accompanied the lion to the spot, marked him for her prey, and sprang on the elephant's flank from the thick bushes. The elephant trumpeted in terror and started off on a run, the lioness clinging to her hold and trying to reach the man, who jabbed at her with his pointed weapon with very little effect. They soon vanished among the trees, going at railroad speed.

Jack and Ada, partially stunned by the shock they had sustained, lay motionless on the ground. The lion, after killing one of the blacks by a blow of his paw seized the other half-dead man by the nape of the neck and dragged him off into the bushes en route to his lair. Thus in an incredibly short space of time the whole complexion of matters was changed in that quiet little glade. Jack was the first to recover, and when he sat up and looked around not a black man was in sight but the dead victim of the lion. The boy was so bewildered that he hardly understood what had happened. His first thought was for his fair companion, who lay with pallid face and closed eyes, close beside him. As he raised her tenderly in his arms, his heart beating with anxiety about her, she opened her eyes and gazed up in his face in a dazed way.

"Ada, are you hurt?" he said eagerly.

"I don't know. I feel no pain. What happened to me?" she replied.

"Blessed if I can tell exactly what did happen. It seemed to me as if we were knocked down by some tremendously strong animal. It must have been a lion, for just before the shock came I heard a terrible roar."

"So did I," replied the girl. "Then—then the next think I knew I seemed to be swept into the land of nowhere."

She released herself from Jack's embrace and sat up.

"Why, there isn't a sign of—yes, there's one there, and he seems to be dead," said Ada, pointing at the motionless Kaffir.

Jack got up and looked at the man.

"He was knocked out by a savage beast, all right," he said. "His body is torn by the animal's claws, and he's as dead as a coffin nail."

"Its sudden appearance was a fortunate thing for us."

"I should say so. Those blacks had us dead to rights. The beast evidently scattered them to the winds, and we are free to go on our way."

As he spoke his eyes rested again on the hole where the rough diamonds lay, and the sight of them drove thoughts of immediate departure from his mind. The dead Kaffir was not a pleasant sight for Ada's eyes, so Jack dragged his body off into the bushes. Then he returned to the hole and began taking out the rough diamonds in sight. The supply, however, only amounted to eight, in addition to the original one that Jack had put in his pocket. Taking out his jackknife he started to turn up the ground in and around the hole. Results immediately followed. Rough matrixes of hard metallic blue clay, in which the diamond was imbedded, turned up with such frequency that the boy was satisfied he had struck a new diamond field.



"Looks as if there were several big fortunes in this ground," he said to Ada.

"My goodness!" she exclaimed. "Do you really think so?"

"I do. The question is, how are we going to benefit by it? I don't see how a person can stake off a claim and secure it in this Godforsaken land, inhabited only by a lot of savage blacks. The only thing we can do is to gather as many of the rough diamonds as we can easily carry in that basket we brought from the hut, and take them with us back to civilization, if we're so fortunate as to ever get there. We ought to be able to carry enough of the diamonds to make us both wealthy."

Ada became just as enthusiastic as Jack over the diamond question. She got the basket, which was a close wicker one, and tossed the matrixes into it as fast as Jack brought them to light, and he worked as rapidly as though he were hunting for a lot of buried twenty-dollar gold pieces. Time passed quickly under the circumstances, and by the time the basket was half full of rough diamonds the sun was sinking down in the western sky. After looking at the bunch they had secured Jack reluctantly called a halt in the work.

"There are diamonds enough to burn here, all right," he said, "but they'll never do us any good. Some day in the future when the white people get a foothold in this part of Africa this new diamond field will be rediscovered and the finders will grow enormously wealthy like the owners of the Kimberly mines. However, we've had the first whack at it, and that will amount to something if we can get what's in that basket to Cape Town. Of course the dealers in rough diamonds will be very anxious to learn where we got these specimens. Maybe I'll be able to form a company of enterprising men and bring them out here, securing a good percentage of all the diamonds dug up. I wouldn't be surprised but I could do that, but it's too soon to talk about such a thing. A fellow ought not to shout before he's out of the woods, and we're not out yet by a long shot."

The basket did not seem particularly heavy till they had gone about half a mile on their way, but after that it seemed to grow heavier with every few yards.

"I guess we've undertaken a contract to carry these diamonds with us," said Jack when they were forced to sit down and rest.

"I'm afraid we have," agreed the girl. "We won't be able to go nearly so fast."

"I suppose not, and we've got a long way to go."

The almost utter hopelessness of carrying the rich freight in their basket on to even the outskirts of civilization greatly depressed Jack, and for awhile he remained silent. It would be a bitter pill to have to abandon the larger part of the diamonds in the wilderness where he could never hope to recover them, but valuable as the rough stones undoubtedly were, their own lives were of much more importance. They were still in Great Namaqua Land and liable to recapture by their enemies, the Tusk Hunters. In fact, for all they knew to the contrary, it might take a week or two of steady traveling before they could reach the land of Cape of Good Hope to the south. Then there was the question of food to consider. The chances of securing even enough fruit to keep up their strength was a matter

of no little anxiety to Jack, who felt that the girl looked to him to unravel all the difficulties of their flight.

"I'm afraid we don't eat tonight, Ada," said Jack as the gloom of evening fell upon the landscape. She leaned her head on his shoulder and said nothing.

"I'm dead sorry for you, little girl," he said in a sympathetic tone, stroking the hair about her forehead, "but I don't see what I can do to better the situation."

"You can't do anything more than you have done, Jack," she replied, throwing one arm caressingly around his neck. "You've done as much as a man could under the circumstances. You've tried to make things as easy for me as you could. You've proved yourself the truest and bravest boy in the world, and I shall always love you for it if I live."

"You won't forget me, then, if we should get out of this scrape?"

"Forget you, Jack! Never!"

"And I shall never forget you. I feel that our mutual misfortunes have drawn us close together. I feel, too, that I have, even during the few days we have been together, learned to care for you even more than as a sister. You'll—you'll not be displeased if I tell you that I love you dearly, Ada?"

"Displeased! Why should I? Don't I owe my life so far to you? Didn't you save me from a terrible fate? You did, and I love you, too, very, very dearly."

Jack put his arm around her waist, drew her to him and kissed her. Then, with the darkness of that African solitude gathering about them, far from the confines of civilization, those two young fugitives sat there hand in hand, very happy in the realization of their first love, and for the time being oblivious of the perils and privations by which they were surrounded.

#### CHAPTER XIV.—The Ambush.

The howl of some wild animals in the distance recalled Jack to the realities of the present and he got up.

"There's a hill about a mile ahead of us," he said. "We must go on as far as that tonight. We may find some hole in the side of it where we can crawl in and sleep. It is hardly safe for us to remain out in the open."

So they took up the basket of diamonds and went on again.

As they drew near the hillside they stopped to rest under a tree. On the ground Jack noticed some decayed fruit. In another moment he was eagerly looking up into the branches of the tree. Lighting one of his few remaining matches he held the flame high above his head. The tree was loaded with fruit. He climbed up the slender trunk and threw down a goodly supply on which they feasted like very hungry people indeed.

What was left over he piled into the basket on top of the rough diamonds. When they reached the foot of the hill their hearts were further gladdened by the sight of a stream of fresh water. They drank long and greedily of the water and then began their slow and laborious ascent of the hill.



"Say," said Jack suddenly and with a new ring to his voice, "I don't think we are more than fifty miles, if as far as that, from the coast. The village of Gobabis is only two big days' journey on foot from it. We've been traveling both south and west since we made our escape. Now, if we were to make straight for the shore, and then travel back northward as far as that little creek where I left my boat in the rushes, why, we'd be right in it. I've a big supply of provisions from the brig in the boat, fully enough to last us for a good while, and that rascal Webb said there is a white settlement on some bay within a hundred miles south. We could carry the diamonds easily by boat, and we would not have to walk any more. I think we can't do better than to make right for the shore and hunt the boat up. To continue our original plan of walking straight south till we came to some ostrich or other farm looks like an endless job, even were we not encumbered with the diamonds. Besides, we are always liable to be retaken by some party of blacks as long as we are on the land. In a boat we would be quite safe from that danger."

Ada agreed with Jack that it would be a wise policy to make straight for the coast in the morning and try to find the boat, so the matter was settled.

No cave nor hole in the ground was met with on the hill, but near the top they came across a big pile of stones. Jack went to work and made a roofless nook for themselves with the stones and earth for the night, which he hoped would offer protection against any wild beast that came that way. He built it seven feet high, just big enough for them to sit in, and closed up the entrance with stones. Then they went to sleep and were not disturbed even by the night cries of the wandering beasts.

The sun was well up when they awoke. Breaking down the entrance they stepped outside, made a meal of fruit and resumed their way toward the summit of the hill in a westerly direction. On reaching the top Jack uttered an exclamation of astonishment. There, spread out before them as far as the eye could reach, and not two miles away, was the Atlantic Ocean. Clearly they had been walking more or less west ever since leaving the cave in the mountains.

What was still more amazing to Jack was the fact that he recognized the locality as being the identical spot, or its duplicate, of the point at which he had come ashore on the evening before his capture. There was the rush-lined creek; the beach where the medicine man had held his foolish incantation scene for the recovery of the king of the Tusk Hunters, and yonder, to the northeast stretched away the log and interlaced forest through which Jack had been carried by his captors on their way to the village of Gobabis. Jack pointed out all the features of the landscape to Ada.

"Talk about luck!" he exclaimed. "This beats anything in that line I ever heard of. Now all we've got to do is to walk down to the head of that creek, and we shall find the boat—that is," he added with an anxious frown, "if the natives who were here with the king didn't find it and appropriate its contents."

Jack, however had every confidence in finding

the boat again, because he had moored it completely under the shelter of the reeds, and because he did not suppose the blacks would hunt for something of whose existence they were ignorant.

He forgot to reckon on one thing, though—the fact that the Tusk Hunter suspected that the fugitives would make for the shore in preference to taking any other avenue of escape from the land. The expected to recapture their late prisoners long before they could reach the coast, but in this they were disappointed. When Noah Webb was wounded and his party of blacks beaten off by the fugitives in the cave, Webb had done just what Jack supposed he would do—he stationed the least injured of his bunch around the entrance of the cave to prevent the escaped prisoners from getting out, and sent the only unwounded man post-haste back to the village for reinforcements.

Twenty Tusk Hunters came back with the messenger, and Webb, who had bathed and bound up his hurt shoulder, led them inside, anticipating no great trouble in overcoming the fugitives by storming the shelf on which he had last seen them. His rage and disappointment were intense when, finding they had disappeared, he learned that there was a rear exit from the cave through the tunnel at the back. He despatched most of his men into the ravine after the fugitives, but as they took a different course from that followed by Jack and Ada they failed to overtake their quarry.

Before Jack and Ada had been located at the cave a large party had started through the long forest under the impression that the fugitives had retreated that way toward the coast. After his failure to capture the young people in the cave Webb, with a couple of blacks, started through the forest to overtake those who had gone on before. They didn't come together till the seashore was reached. Webb knew that Jack had come down the coast that far in a boat, and he set the blacks to work searching for it.

The discovered it without much trouble, and then Webb set a trap in the vicinity of the concealed boat, which he did not for the present disturb, in order to surprise Jack and Ada in the event that they succeeded in eluding the other parties on their trail, and reached the shore. So, at the very moment that Jack and the girl started to descend the hill two miles away, their objective point being the boat, Webb and a dozen Tusk Hunters were concealed close to the creek, patiently waiting for them to turn up, and Webb had an idea they would be there, for no messenger had as yet reached him with word that the fugitives had been retaken by the other blacks out in search for them.

Jack and Ada were blissfully unconscious that they were walking into an ambush prepared especially for them. They came toward the head of the creek with the basket of rough diamonds between them, and when within an eighth of a mile of the spot, Webb, who was watching the country around from the lower branches of a tall tree, discovered them. Slipping down the smooth trunk, he notified his men that the fugitives were coming that way. When he hid himself in the grass opposite the ambushade and waited for the escaped prisoners to come up, when, on his signal, the blacks were to rush out and capture them.



At last they reached the edge of the trap and put down the basket, then Jack, leaving the girl, started ahead to see if his boat was still where he had left it. At that critical moment the unexpected happened. A small, but particularly venomous, snake came crawling through the grass close to Webb. The rascal was unconscious of its presence because his attention was wholly fixed on the fugitives. The snake fixed its diamond eyes on Webb's leg. Just then the rascal drew back a bit further into the grass and accidentally trod on the reptile.

Like a flash of light its head darted forward with a loud, angry hiss and sunk its fangs into Webb's calf—once, twice, thrice. The rascal uttered a scream and sprang into the air, rolling out of the tall grass. Jack stopped like a shot and his hand went to his revolver. The blacks, mistaking Webb's screams for the signal agreed upon, rose up and rushed out into the open. Jack, instead of being within a few feet of them, was still thirty feet away.

"Out with your revolver, Ada, and shoot as they come up!" he cried hurriedly. A fusillade of revolver shots greeted the approach of the blacks, and threw them into confusion, for every bullet met a mark. Then grabbing the girl by the hand Jack dragged her into the tall grass which closed behind them, just as the natives darted forward again.

#### CHAPTER XV.—Conclusion.

A couple of the blacks remained behind to see what was the matter with Webb, who was rolling in agony on the ground, the deadly poison coursing through his veins like liquid fire. Jack and Ada rushed through the tall grass with the enemy in hot pursuit and overtaking them rapidly. One big Tusk Hunter outstripped his fellows and sighted the fugitives just as they reached the edge of the forest. He reached forward and seized Ada by the arm. The girl uttered a scream as she felt his clutch and Jack turned about.

Thrusting his revolver against the fellow's broad chest, he pulled the trigger. Down went the native with a bullet in his heart. Jack then pulled Ada into a thick clump of bushes and there they sank down and remained as silent as two mice. Of the original dozen blacks that had composed the ambush only four now came into sight. Two were back with Webb, five had gone down under the first rapid fire of the fugitives, and one Jack had just shot.

They set up a jabbering when they discovered the dead man, and then scattered through the forest. As soon as they were out of sight Jack led Ada back through the grass toward the creek again, but in a roundabout way. When they reached the vicinity of the ambush Jack, to his amazement beheld Webb lying stark dead and stiff on the ground. Jack thought that one of the bullets fired at the blacks when they made their first rush had hit Webb.

"Well, he's got what was coming to him, that's certain, and I'm not a bit sorry he was bowled out," he said. Of the five Tusk Hunters that went down under the first fire of the fugitives, four were wounded and one seemingly dead.

The two who had stayed back with Webb till they saw that the rascal was pegging out had joined in the pursuit in the forest. Jack felt that now was his opportunity to look up the boat. Leaving Ada hidden in the grass he stole over to the creek, and knowing just where to look he found the boat as he had left her about a week since. Running back to the girl he led her to the boat and told her to get in.

"I'm going back for the basket of diamonds," he said. "If any of the rascals should appear before I return, push off down the creek, and shoot at them if they try to swim out to you."

With that Jack hurried away on his quest for the basket of diamonds, which he soon secured, and flew back to the boat. Ada, who had been in a fever of anxiety while he was away, welcomed him with a little cry of relief and satisfaction. As he handed the basket over the gunwale of the boat three of the six blacks on their trail came running back in answer to the cries of the wounded men.

Jack had just time to step into the boat and push off when they rushed up to the edge of the creek. Ada discharged her last bullet at the foremost, and he tumbled into the water with a death-cry on his lips. The other two leaped into the creek and swam for the boat. Jack handed his revolver to Ada and told her to keep them off while he rowed backward down the creek. As one of the rascals put his hand on the gunwale of the boat the resolute girl leaned forward and shot him in the face.

She then fired at the other, who was so close that she couldn't miss him. The bullet entered his windpipe and he sank with a gurgle in the stream. The other three blacks now came up to the edge of the stream and flung their spears after the fugitives. Their aim was good—one grazing Jack's head, a second tearing a great gash out of Ada's sleeve, while the third shot between the two fugitives, within less than a foot of either.

Seeing they had failed to hit the runaways, the natives rushed back to their wounded comrades to secure their spears. While they were gone, Jack turned the boat around and got its head pointed down the creek toward the ocean. As he started to row a long stroke the blacks reappeared with two spears each. The Tusk Hunters had proved themselves such good marksmen that the fugitives feared they would not escape a second cast of the native weapons.

"Our only chance is to spring ashore, hide in the grass and pepper them with my revolver," said Jack. Dropping his oars he seized the painter and jumped ashore. As Ada followed his example a spear whizzed close to his ear. Jack took the revolver from her and they flung themselves down in the grass just in time to avoid two more spears. The boy took careful aim at one of the blacks and fired.

The fellow clapped his hands to his broad chest and sank on the ground. The other two dropped out of sight. Jack sprang up and ran ahead a few yards, dragging the boat by its painter. The two blacks sprang up and hurled their spears at him. Jack was on the watch and dropped at full length the moment they took aim, consequently they missed him. Seeing they had exhausted their supply of weapons the boy cried:

"Get into the boat again, Ada. Now's our chance to get off." As she started to obey Jack



fired in rapid succession at the blacks on the opposite bank. He missed both, but frightened them into a rapid retreat. Jack resumed rowing, and in five minutes they were out on the comparatively placid bosom of the ocean, rapidly increasing their distance from the shore. At a distance of an eighth of a mile Jack turned the boats head down the coast and assured Ada that their chances of reaching a white settlement, and eventually Cape Town, were first-rate.

After rowing six or seven miles, Jack pulled in to the shore, which was evidently deserted, for a rest and to eat dinner. After an hour he resumed his course.

Six days later they rounded a point of land opening up a bay and a white settlement of a hundred or more houses and stores, while several sloops and schooners rode at anchor in the little harbor. They were received in a hospitable way by the head man of the settlement, who invited them to stay at his house till arrangements could be made to send them on to Cape Town by water.

Jack said nothing about the diamonds which he had nailed up in one of the provision boxes, and two weeks later he and Ada stepped ashore with their box of treasure on one of the wharves at Cape Town. Ada took Jack with her to her aunt's home, where word had just been received by her relatives from the ostrich farm that the girl had unaccountably disappeared two weeks since, and it was feared she had been kidnapped by some wandering party of Tusk hunters who were occasionally seen in that vicinity. Jack reported the loss of the brig "Cinnabar" to the consignees in the town, and his graphic story of the wreck, together with his capture by the Tusk Hunters, and subsequent thrilling escape with Ada Ward, was printed in the papers.

The boy showed the rough diamonds to Ada's uncle by marriage, and told him how he had discovered what he believed was a new diamond mine in Great Namaqua Land. The diamonds were submitted to experts, who estimated their value at \$150,000 in English money, and this sum was paid over to Jack for them. Jack offered half to Ada, but she refused to take more than one-third of the money. With the assistance of Ada's uncle an expedition was fitted out to visit the site of the new diamond field.

Jack of course, accompanied it as guide. The party proceeded up the coast in a schooner, and on reaching the scene of the young people's adventures on the creek came to anchor. Jack led a strongly-armed party in the direction of the glade where he had discovered the diamonds. They had a good deal of trouble in finding it, but they did at last. The ground was then dug over and something like a million dollars' worth of rough gems found. That seemed to exhaust the mine, and after digging a while longer with unsatisfactory results the party returned to Cape Town with the results of the trip.

Jack received a quarter of the net results after all expenses had been paid and this gave him something over \$200,000 more. He and Ada then set out for the United States by a steamer via the Azores and Southampton, reaching New York in due time. Jack went back to school looking as brown as a berry, and as strong and hearty as an ox.

He entered Princeton a year later, and immediately after his graduation, four years after-

ward, he and Ada were married, and settled down in a fine little home in Larchmont where they are living today. Although it is several years since the events just described happened, and Jack and Ada are the happiest of wedded couples. They never recall without a thrill the brief but strenuous time they had among the Tusk Hunters.

Next week's issue will contain: "A GAME BOY; OR, FROM THE SLUMS TO WALL STREET."

### A GHASTLY FIND

A Norfolk and Western railroad contractor, from Pocahontas County, W. Va., tells of a most ghastly and horrible discovery which was made near the line of that road some days since. He says that one night three mules belonging to the contractor broke loose from the stablemen and ran away. The next morning two negroes were started in search of the runaways. After trailing the mules over the hills until late in the day, the men found themselves in a very desolate portion of the mountains, and far from human habitation. In following the mules the trail led up a deep gorge, bounded on both sides by huge rocks, and backing into the very depths of the mountains. After following the gorge several miles they came to where it forked. Something like a half mile of the right hand gorge rises in an overhanging precipice upward of 150 feet in height. From the top of this ledge, through thick curtains of moss, trickle a small stream of water.

At the base of this ridge lie great masses of broken and jagged rocks, concealed by a thick growth of shrubbery and nettles. It was at the base of this precipice that the negroes made a most awful discovery. A heap of human bones, grinning skulls, fractured as if by heavy blows, broken thigh and arm bones, and skeletons of feet and hands were strewn over the rough ground. The bones were in different stages of decomposition, and represented not less than a baker's dozen of human beings when in line. One body which time had not as yet caused to lose all semblance to a human being was discovered. Shreds of flesh were yet clinging to the grinning skeleton, which showed signs of having served as a feast for a wild beast, possibly a bear, as they are known to be quite plentiful in that vicinity.

The negroes were so horrified over their discovery as to forget the original purpose of their journey, and fled toward camp. They were so frightened on reaching camp as to be unable to give intelligent answers to queries. Many theories are rife as to the origin of the bones. How they came there is a question which now bothers the brains of residents thereabout, and no one seems to know or can give a plausible theory.

That they are bones of murdered human beings, no one doubts, but who are the murderers and who the victims is as yet a mystery which will try the skill of the best detectives. Every effort is now being made by the county authorities to unravel the darkness surrounding the find, and which promises to equal, if not surpass, anything in the history of West Virginia. Since the find many theories are rife concerning the locality. The bones were buried where found, one grave serving as a last resting place for the murdered dead.



## WILL, THE WAGON BOY

or, The Diamonds that Came by Express

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

## CHAPTER V.—(Continued)

"Wait. I came to New York and opened a private sanitarium for the nervous diseases of rich people here on West Fifty-seventh street. You are now in my sanitarium and happen to be my only patient."

"I am not rich, doctor. I am only a——"

"A poor wagon boy, without a cent to your name. I understand that fully. I have been waiting for a year for my first rich patient. He hasn't turned up yet. In fact, I haven't had any patients, rich or poor, until I took a man in some time ago. You are my second patient."

"But how came you to take me? How came I to be here?" demanded Will.

"On that one subject my lips are sealed, so don't ask me. A whole lot of things may happen to you before you get through with this business, but no matter what happens I want you to remember that I, Doctor Pajaro, am your only friend."

"I'm dreadfully puzzled, doctor."

"I know you are, and I'd like to relieve your mind, but I can't. In fact, I am going to tell you something which will disturb your mind not a little, and I shall have to wait until you get over the shock before I go any further. You must not think of leaving this place until I give the word."

"How can I leave it when the window is blocked and the door fastened?"

"I blocked the window to keep you from jumping out. There was a week and more during which you were raving mad. Do you see that scar on my forehead? You did that. You hit me with that antique candlestick on the mantel-piece while I was trying to control you. Will, if you had been my own brother I could not have done more for you than I have."

"I'm sure I'm very thankful," murmured Will. "It was so very kind of you, and——"

"Stop! I don't want to be misunderstood, or to lay claim to what does not belong to me," broke in the doctor. "I did not care for you through motives of kindness, but from entirely different motives, of which you know nothing whatever, and probably may never know. Now I am going to give you a mental shock which will certainly be all you can bear to-day. I do it because it is absolutely necessary that you should understand it. You remember going with Mr. Allen to that lapidary's place on Maiden Lane?"

"Can I ever forget it?" murmured Will beginning to tremble.

"Take it easy. You remember the murder which you discovered?"

"Yes, yes! Karl Kutter! It was terrible! I——"

"Wait. One question. You left Mr. Allen to go for a policeman?"

"Yes."

"What happened?"

"I ran into a man on the stairs. He butted me in the stomach, and I fell."

"Downstairs?"

"Yes."

"You are sure he butted you?"

"Positive. I ought to know."

"And the last thing you remember is falling downstairs?"

"Yes."

"Well let me tell you what happened after that. This man—he was a big man, wasn't he?"

"One of the biggest fellows I ever saw; almost a giant."

"Well this giant picked you up with the help of others, and carried you out to your wagon. He told the people who helped him that he was Mr. Allen, the proprietor of the express."

"That is nonsense. I left Mr. Allen upstairs. Besides, Mr. Allen is rather a small man."

"I know. You were driven away in the wagon, which was afterwards found abandoned on a West Side street. Somewhere on the journey you were transferred to a cab which brought you here. I personally received you, and I found that I had to deal with a bad case of fractured skull."

"But who——"

"Wait. I shall not tell you. Now for my disclosure. Since your disappearance the police and detectives have been searching for you on two continents. You are charged with stealing the Pojemhin diamonds, and with the murder of Karl Kutter, the lapidary. Personally I know you to be innocent of both charges, and I—Heavens! What have I done?"

Doctor Pajaro sprang to his feet and made a rush for the bed.

Will's head had dropped back upon the pillow, and every vestige of color had left his face.

"The shock was too much for him," murmured the young doctor. "I ought to have known better than to break it to him so soon."

At the same moment an electric bell rang out violently downstairs.

"He has come!" breathed the doctor through his set teeth. "All right; let him come! I will spoil his schemes and recover the diamonds if I can only save this boy."

He seized the graduated glass, and taking a small medicine case from his pocket extracted a bottle and poured out a few drops of a reddish fluid which he poured into Will's open mouth.

"He lives!" he murmured, after a moment.

A low knock on the door interrupted him. The doctor opened it to admit an elderly man, evidently a Hindu, who extended his hands and made a profound salaam.

"It is the prince, most illustrious," he said in a tone of deep respect.

"All right," replied the doctor. "Remain here, Rumbajo. Watch the boy closely. If his breathing changes, call me."

The doctor then descended the stairs, and entering a little office, found himself face to face with a man of distinguished appearance and extraordinary size. Whether or no Will would have recognized him, the doctor knew that this was the



man who had caused the wagon boy's mishap by butting him on the stairs of the old building down on Maiden Lane.

## CHAPTER VI.

### Bogano the Giant.

If young Dr. Pajaro's giant visitor was a prince he certainly received no different treatment than any ordinary citizen of New York might have expected in making a call on a medical man.

"Good-morning," said the doctor, motioning his visitor to a chair and preparing himself to lie in first-class shape, as will be seen.

"Morning," growled the giant, in the surliest possible fashion. "How is he? What is the report?"

"Bad. No change."

"Not a bit?"

"None."

"He is still unconscious?"

"Yes."

"When do you expect to be able to bring him around? I am getting tired of this waiting."

"I hope for a change every day, but these cases are slow."

"Slow! I should say this one was. See here, doc!"

"Sir, my name is Dr. Japaro."

"Well, then, see here, Dr. Pajano, if there isn't some improvement pretty suddenly I'm going to take the boy away."

The young Hindu smiled, showing a double row of white glittering teeth.

"I think not!" he said.

"Who cares what you think. I am running this business."

"I think not."

"What do you mean?"

"That I know who my patient is."

"Well?"

"That's all."

"Come, come."

"I said that's all."

"I tell you——"

"Stop! Mr. Bogan! I——"

"What in thunder do you mean by calling me Bogan? That's not my name!"

"Nor is mine Pajama, my friend," retorted the doctor, with another glittering smile.

"My name is Bogano; call me by it, if you please. Bogan is an Irish name. I'm not Irish. I'm from Bulgaria, as I told you before."

"Oh," said the doctor. "Then please to remember that my name is Pajaro. But why waste all this time? If you have brought me the money for my bill, or a check, I am ready to take it; otherwise I see no object in you prolonging your call."

"I've brought you neither money nor check," snarled the giant. "This is a case of no cure no pay. I want to see the boy."

"You can't see him. He is in no state to be disturbed by strangers."

"I must see him."

"Sir, you won't see him!" cried the doctor, stamping his foot.

His black eyes glittered, and his teeth were whiter than ever.

"What if I insist? What if I force my way up to his room?" demanded Bogano.

"What if I telephoned the police that Will, the

wagon boy, the missing suspect in the Kutter murder case, is in Dr. Pajaro's sanitarium?" the doctor demanded in a low meaning voice.

The rage which the giant felt showed itself in his face. It reddened fearfully; the veins of his thick neck swelled almost to bursting.

"Look out, doc!" he hissed. "Don't you try any games on me or you will find out that you have waked up the wrong man. Listen. I give you one more week. Either get the boy back to consciousness by that time or there'll be trouble—see!"

With that Bogano the giant stalked out of the office, let himself out the front door, which he slammed viciously behind him, and hurried down the steps. Dr. Pajaro showed his Eastern origin then. Until the door closed his face remained immovable. Then he stuck out his tongue and wagged it, stamped his foot, and spit three times on the floor.

"Beast!" he hissed, fiercely. "You a prince! You a Bulgarian! You—you—you are a—a——"

He did not seem to be able to find any simile to suit him, so once more sticking out his tongue in contempt of his departing visitor he hurried off upstairs. Who or what Dr. Pajaro may have been, he certainly proved himself a good friend to Will. Night and day he watched over him. He bathed the boy twice daily in a snug little Turkish bath below stairs, giving him massage with his own hands. All night he sat in the Morris chair by the bedside, seldom sleeping more than a few minutes at a time, every ready to attend to Will's wants.

When he did leave the room it was usually to prepare meals for his patient, which were of the faintest description. In short, he spared no pains to nurse Will back to health, and so successful was he that by the end of the week the wagon boy was quite his old self again, and could have been discharged without the least danger to his future good health. During this time Dr. Pajaro made Will go over the affair of the diamonds again and again, until he was thoroughly familiar with every detail which remained in the boy's memory.

Will became very much attached to him. His peculiar appearance, his masterful manner, and his absolute superiority to any young man Will had ever been thrown in contact with all had their effect. On the last day of the week the doctor took Will out to ride in a closed carriage. They went through the park and beyond, and Will returned feeling almost well. That evening they had a little supper together in a room behind the office, with old Rumbejo to wait on them. The doctor began telling of his early life in India, and he and he and Will talked about London. At last, when the conversation flagged, Will put the question which had been on his tongue's end all day—in fact, for several days.

"Doctor," he began, "when is all this to end? What am I to do? Must I give myself up to the police? I——"

"Stop!" broke in the doctor. "You must not disturb yourself. When the right time comes I will tell you what to do. What we want is to find those diamonds; that's the beginning and end of it all. Will, if you stick close to me we can do it, too."

"I'm not going to do anything else as long as you will let me stick to you," replied Will. "But there is the mystery of the murder to be solved."

"Bah!" cried the doctor. "An old man without friend or relatives. What then? All must die."



What difference does it make when or how? No, no, Will. You do not understand. What we want are the diamonds. Help me to get them, and then—why then—"

Just then the bell rang with something of the violence which it had rung on the day when Will first came back to life. Dr. Pajaro looked annoyed.

"Who can that be come to disturb us?" he exclaimed. "I'll make short work of him, whoever he is. My attempt to establish private practice as a specialist in New York has been a failure. I want to go back to India. I have money—lots of it, and—well, Rumbajo, what now?"

"The Prince Bogano and a lady, most illustrious!" said the old Hindu, entering the dining-room with a profound salaam.

Dr. Pajaro sprang to his feet.

"I can't see them to-night!" he said. "Tell them my patient remains in the same condition. Tell them——"

"Tell them no lies, for they won't stand for it!" cried a shrill voice, and a young woman, elegantly dressed, pushed old Rumbajo aside, and burst into the room.

It was Madame Sandusky! Will recognized the opera singer at a glance. Behind her came the giant, setting the old Hindu's feeble protests with a kick.

"Now is the reckoning day, doc!" he cried. "What does all this mean?"

"Leave my house!" stormed the doctor, in a fury. "Go! Go!"

"Not on your life!" screamed Madame Sandusky. "I believe on my soul that he has the diamonds, prince."

"Hush! That's rubbish," retorted the giant. "I know. He has designs—deep ones. I've been in India. Served seven years in a British regiment. I know his kind. He hasn't got the diamonds, but he has his own scheme for getting them, and he has got to let me in on the deal!"

By this time Dr. Pajaro had grown calm—fearfully so. He stood like a bronze statue, his little, shiny black eyes fixed on the giant, his dusky face almost pale.

"Have you brought the money for my bill?" he asked.

"Money be hanged!" cried the giant. "We want that boy. You'll give him up, too!"

"Never!"

"What?"

"I say never."

"Ha, you fool! You are alone in this house, with no one but an old nigger woman, this old idiot, and the boy. I'll stand you on your head! I'll make you tell your game. I——"

The little doctor flew at his throat like some wild beast. But the big man was good for him. Seizing the doctor by the waist, the giant lifted him clean off the floor and turned him upside down. Rumbajo fled from the room, calling "Police." Madame Sandusky clapped her hands, and cried:

"Good! Good!"

It was up to Will now, and he was all there.

"Drop him!" he shouted, springing up and seizing a chair, which he brought down upon the head of the giant with crushing force.

## CHAPTER VII.

### Strange Company for a Wagon Boy.

Will, charged with committing one murder, had come very close to committing another. Prince Bogano lay stretched upon the floor, bleeding about the head, and quite unconscious. Dr. Pajaro had fallen with him, but pulling himself out from beneath the bulky form of the giant, he sprang up as nimbly as a squirrel, and darted after the prima donna, who had run out into the hall.

"Madame! Hold! If you want your diamonds tie to me!" he cried, hissing. "In no other way will you ever get them! Pass out of that door and the gems of the Pojemkins will never be yours."

And then, in the same breath, he spoke hurried words in Hindustanee to Rumbajo, who instantly closed the door and bolted it. Twice he had called "police!" but as yet there had been no response. Will, horror-stricken at what he had done, devoutly hoped there might be none. He shook like a leaf. Everything seemed to go swimming about him. It was all he could do to keep from fainting away again. Thus, much as he desired to help his new friend the doctor, he could do nothing but remain perfectly still.

Nor did Dr. Pajaro seem to require his help. The little Hindu had gained complete control of himself—indeed, he only lost it for a moment—and he now took madame in hand again.

"This man is not your friend," he said, fixing his eyes on the opera singer. "He has been fooling you."

"I don't know him," Madame Sandusky hastily replied. "I never saw him until yesterday, and I don't know you."

"It is so. You know that boy who struck him, though."

"Yes; he is Allen's wagon boy, who murdered the old diamond cutter."

"It is a lie!" Will wanted to shout, but a quick warning glance from the doctor made him keep silent.

"There is a reward for this boy. Do you think to claim it? Do you intend to betray him?"

"I have no such intention," replied the woman, trembling under the doctor's steady gaze.

"Good! What you really want are the diamonds?"

"Yes."

"And I shall help you to recover them. This man came to you promising to do so."

"He did."

"He told you that he represented the last of the Bogano family, hereditary princes of Pojemkin, a province in Bulgaria; that he wanted to see his dead cousin's will carried out. Is that true?"

"It is all true. How can you know?" breathed the opera singer.

Her eyes were fixed upon the doctor now. He seemed to have fascinated her as a snake will fascinate a bird. Will, who was a pretty well-read boy in his way, thought that the doctor must be a hypnotist, and that he would soon begin to try his powers on Madame Sandusky.

He did not realize that he had already tried them, that he was trying them now.

(To be continued)



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## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### SNOWS OF DAKOTAS

Though North and South Dakota are much colder than New York State in winter, they have far less snow.

### FORTY-INCH GLASS

The largest refracting telescope in the world is in Yerkes Observatory, at Williams Bay, Wis. It has an object glass measuring 40 inches. The largest reflecting telescope is at the Canadian government laboratory on Little Sanitch, Hill, six miles from Victoria, B. C.

### PROTECTING GLASS

Several folds of ordinary window screen will completely protect a flask or beaker from breaking, even over a hot gas flame. The screen conducts the heat away from the gases of the fire. If appreciable air spaces exist between the layers the flame may be toned down from a sharp to a gently diffused heat.

### HIS SEVEN-YEAR WALK GIVES HER DIVORCE

Seven years ago Clark Lohman of Beacon, N. Y., went out for a walk. Perhaps along Enoch Arden lane. That kind of a divorce has just been granted Mrs. Adelaide Lohman by Supreme Court Justice A. H. Seeger. Lohman had become melancholy prior to his departure, his wife declared. She believes he is dead.

### HIS CROSS-EYED DOG CURED BY SPECTACLES, OWNER SAYS

The wearing of a pair of spectacles by Ling Foi, a pedigreed chow dog, has practically straightened the animal's cross eyes, according to its owner, C. G. Douglas, a druggist, of 405 Bergenline Avenue, Union City, N. Y.. Douglas explained that a veterinary had advocated the treatment and how several months ago he had obtained special lenses and placed the spectacles on Ling Foi.

At first the dog did not like the spectacles, said Douglas, but it soon became accustomed to them, and its eyes have slowly but surely been straight-

ened. Douglas said that for a long time patrons of his drug store thought he put the spectacles on the dog as an advertising stunt.

### SUBMARINE RAMS WHALE

A clash between the big navy submarine V-1 and a huge whale, in which the whale came off second best, was reported by the crew of the undersea craft on arrival here from Key West, Fla. The whale's back was believed to have been broken by the impact in the collision, which occurred under water off Cape Cod. The V-1 was unhurt.

The V-1, one of the largest under-water craft in the world, was putting into Provincetown late the other day, according to Lieut. Commander Sherwood Picking. Off Lonfi Point the submarine submerged. As she was coming up the crew felt the submarine strangely jarred. When they reached the surface a great whale 58 feet long was found bent about the bow of the V-1.

The crew put three harpoons into the big creature and towed it into Provincetown so that the populace might see the submarine's first capture. Later the submarine towed the carcass out to sea and sank it.

## LAUGHS

"What were your father's last words?"  
"Father had no last words. Mother was with him to the end."

Small boy—"Ten cents' worth of castor oil, please."  
Druggist—"The tasteless kind, I presume?"  
Small boy—"No! It's for father!"

Waiter—"You made that fellow eat his words, eh?"  
Chef—"Bet cher life."  
Waiter—"I trew his letter inter de hash."

Mamma—"Ikey, vat you vant for yer birt'day?"  
Ikey (after a pause)—"A box of matches."  
Papa (proudly)—"Such a peesness man he'll make."

Stranger—"Pardon me, madam; out here on this historic battlefield you are weeping. Woman—Ah, me! My husband fought in this battle. Stranger—I see. And he was killed? Woman—No, he lived, and I married him.

"What would you do if you could play the piano as well as I can?" asked the young lady of the housemaid. "Shure, an' Oi wouldn't get discouraged at all, at all!" replied the girl. "Oi'd kape roight on larnin' till Oi could play it dacently."

Augustus (no longer the youthful)—"Well, there's one comfort; they say at forty a man is either a fool or a physician." Angelina (nearly swallowing a yawn)—"Are you a physician, then?" Augustus—"No," Angelina—"Oh!"

Mr. Richly—"I think a great strong man like you ought to be ashamed to ask a stranger for money." Bad Mike—"I guess I oughtn't, mister, but I've got a kind heart an' I hate to tap you on de block and take it away from you."



## RICHARD DENTON'S FOLLY

"I tell you, Richard Denton, that if you wed that bold, intriguing woman, I will cut you off with a shilling."

Thus spoke Squire Denton, the master of Denton Hall, and the owner of one of the finest estates in England.

The old squire was a tall, stern-looking man, with hard, prominent features and determined gray eyes.

His only son, Richard, who was standing before him in the woods, was a timid, weak-minded looking young man of effeminate appearance.

"I have promised the lady, father," he replied, as he fumbled his watch chain.

"The young lady, forsooth! Why, she is only my gardener's daughter. As to your promise, I'll soon settle that point. You will set out for the continent to-morrow, and that jade will not set eyes on you again."

"I love Alice Jones, father."

"Tush! She has bewitched you for the time with her bold, handsome face. She is plotting to become mistress of Denton Hall. Obey me, or I will cut you off in my will."

The squire whistled to his dogs, and turned away, leaving the weak young man standing in the wood like one who had received his death sentence.

He had proceeded but a short distance through the wood, when at tall young woman sprang out on the path before him.

"You here?" cried the squire.

"Yes, I am here, and I was there!" cried the young woman, in excited tones.

Her eyes were flashing with anger as she held her hat in one hand and placed her arms akimbo, while she regarded the squire with an expression of deep hatred.

"What do you want with me?" demanded the squire, in stern tones.

"Your son will marry me this very night, and I will be mistress of Denton Hall."

"If my foolish son weds you to-night, I will disinherit him to-morrow. You will never be mistress of Denton Hall."

The old squire was about to turn away, when the young woman cried:

"Beware, Squire Denton! I love your son, and he loves me."

"Tush!"

"Tush! The old aristocrat treats me with scorn. Well, the jade will yet be mistress of Denton Hall. I swear it—I swear it!"

She was turning away to seek her weak-minded lover when a middle-aged woman appeared on the path before her.

The woman resembled the young girl in every feature as well as in manner.

"You made a mistake in appealing to that heart of flint, Alice," she said.

"I know it, mother but I could not bear to be insulted."

"Well, well, you go out and seek Richard and take him to Leeds with you. Force him to wed you tonight. The arrangements are all made for the wedding. Trust me to settle with that arrogant old humbug. I hate him, also."

"How will you settle with him?"

"Never you mind. I swear, also, that you will be mistress of Denton Hall."

"You must be careful, mother. If father sees you around here, you are lost."

"I will not be seen. In less than five minutes I will be disguised. Hasten after the young fool. Insist on his marrying you this very evening. Leave me to settle with the old villain."

At nine o'clock that night Squire Denton received private yet positive information to the effect that his weak-minded son had married Alice Jones in Leeds that evening.

"My heaven!" he groaned, "my son joined in wedlock to the daughter of a notorious criminal—the vilest creature on earth. I will cast him out forever."

The angry father immediately dispatched a messenger for Lawyer Barton, who had charge of his legal affairs, summoning him to the hall on the following morning to make his will.

Richard Denton was to be cut off with a single smiling, and the immense estate was to be left to a distant relative.

When the old squire retired to bed that night he was excited and uneasy.

He was a brave man, and he was not superstitious, yet he could not help muttering:

"Would that I had made my will before retiring. If I should die to-night that virago will be mistress here."

While pondering over his son's unfortunate marriage he fell into a slight doze, from which he was awakened by a slight noise at the back of the curtained bedstead.

"What can that be?" he muttered.

"It is your death signal," hissed a fiendish voice in his ear.

Before the stern old squire could raise his voice or move a limb in his own defense he received a stunning blow on the temple.

Fifteen minutes later, two male figures stole through the garden at the back of Denton Hall, and strode toward the wood, where the squire had encountered Alice Jones.

"We have made a good haul to-night, Bill," remarked one of the men.

"That we have. The old fellow's hash is cooked in the bargain."

On the following morning there was a fearful uproar at Denton Hall.

The old squire was found murdered in his bed, money, jewels and plate were missing, and the bedroom was in great disorder.

Detectives were summoned from London and from Leeds, the squire's son was sent for, and a large reward was offered for the apprehension of the burglarious murderers.

When Richard Denton was asked where he had spent the previous night, he confessed that he had wedded Alice Jones, the gardener's daughter, in secret, and that they had put up at a humble hotel at Leeds under assumed names.

And so the gardener's daughter became mistress at Denton Hall.

About a month after the murder Tom Jones was induced to emigrate to America by his self-willed daughter.

Six months elapsed after the murder, and yet no trace of the perpetrators of the deed had been discovered.

As the gentry of the neighborhood would not as-



sociate with the gardener's daughter, the strong-willed woman forced her weak husband to take up an abode in London.

They were scarcely installed in the London house when Alice remarked:

"My mother is going to live with us, Richard."

"Your mother, Alice! Why, I—I—always understood that she was a—a——"

"I know what you would say. My mother has been belied. She is an injured woman. I will have my way. She will live with us."

And the willful woman had her way.

Richard Denton had learned to fear his young wife, and he soon learned to fear the mother-in-law a great deal more.

She drank brandy to excess; she was addicted to gambling, and she received visitors who would not be admitted into any respectable house.

Among those visitors was a Captain Todd, who boasted that he had served with great honor in India.

Richard Denton was a silly fellow, but he was aroused at last.

Among his college friends residing in London was a manly, dare-devil kind of a fellow named Jack Watson, and to this friend Dick Denton unburdened himself.

Jack Watson was engaged as an inspector or detective for one of the leading insurance companies of London, and he was often employed in very intricate affairs.

"You want to get rid of the mother-in-law, I see?" he asked.

"And Captain Todd."

"Call me a cad if I don't fix the pair of them in short order, providing you give me full sway in the whole matter."

"I will, if you will guarantee that my dear wife does not get in trouble."

"Hang your mother-in-law. All right about your wife. I'm going to dinner with you to-day. Introduce me as your dear friend, and don't be jealous if I make love to your handsome wife."

After dinner the cards were introduced, and Jack was very fortunate.

Captain Todd cheated in a slovenly manner, but the jovial Jack managed to beat him by clever sleight-of-hand tricks.

And all the time he was watching the wife and the mother-in-law, who were indulging in large quantities of brandy and soda at a side table.

The three men played on doubling the stakes now and again; and still Jack Watson continued to win large sums, while he was getting uproariously drunk at the same time—to all appearance.

Then the card playing was suspended, as Captain Todd had no more money to lose.

"Confound it all," groaned Jack, as he reeled to a sofa. "I am used up. Pardon me, ladies, if I take an hour's nap."

The ladies did pardon him, and Jack was soon snoring away at a "go-as-you-please" rate.

"How much has he won, captain?" inquired Mrs. Jones, when they were all assured that the guest was in a drunken sleep.

"Over two thousand pounds, Alice. You must soon make another call upon your husband's purse."

"I won't do it."

"You must!" cried her mother.

At last the quarrel was settled by the young

wife agreeing to demand a large amount of money from her husband on the following morning, and the gay captain kissed each of the ladies in turn sneering:

"We must stick together, my dears."

He then approached the snorer, and he was about to draw a roll of banknotes from Jack's pocket when the latter sprang up suddenly struck the rascal on the head with a life-preserver and knocked him senseless to the floor.

"Don't stir ladies," he cried, as he advanced on the astonished woman, holding a pistol in each hand. "You are my prisoners."

"Your prisoners!" gasped the mother, as her flushed face grew pale. "What can you mean?"

"I mean that I have heard every word that you uttered tonight, woman. That fellow is the famous burglar, Bill Croft, and you are his accomplice. You murdered and robbed old Squire Denton on the night of your daughter's marriage."

The virago made a spring at Jack, drawing a knife from her breast at the same moment, as she cried:

"I'll soon shut your mouth."

Jack fired and the woman fell dead.

"Oh, spare me—spare me," cried the young wife, "for I am innocent!"

The young wife burst a blood-vessel and died protesting that it was his paramour who had dispatched the unfortunate man.

Dick Denton was placed in a private asylum, where he died soon after.

Strangely enough, it was soon discovered that Jack Watson was the legal heir to the great estate, and he was placed in possession.

## NIAGARA HERO SLIPS ON ORANGE PEEL AND DIES

The death of Bobby Leach, reported from Christchurch, New Zealand, removes one of the most picturesque figures from the Niagara district. Besides going over the falls in a barrel on July 25, 1911, Leach many times defied death in sensational stunts there.

He successfully negotiated the Whirlpool Rapids in a barrel, dropped with a parachute from the upper arch bridge over the gorge, and from an airplane over the falls, he performed many other similar feats of daring.

Those who knew him here feel that nature played an ironic joke on him in terminating his life by the most prosaic of accidents—a slip on an orange peel on the sidewalk.

Leach's last exploit here was late last Fall when he attempted to swim the lower river just below the falls. He failed when he tried to recover his false teeth, which fell out, and was brought back to shore by a boat that had been following him.

The feat was successfully accomplished a week or so later by William (Red) Hill, veteran Canadian riverman, causing Leach much chagrin.

With his wife and young daughter, Leach left this city late in October, 1925, for twenty-nine weeks in vaudeville in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. He proposed showing motion pictures of his feats in his vaudeville appearances.

He sent back a few newspapers telling of his success on the vaudeville tour.



## GOOD READING

### THIEVES' LANGUAGE.

"Peddler's French" was a term used for the speech of thieves and beggars of London a century or so ago.

### INDIAN POPULATION INCREASING

The Indian population of the United States is 344,303, an increase during the last year of 1,144. Oklahoma continues to lead among the States with a total of 119,290, Arizona being second with 43,015. Delaware reported two Indian inhabitants and West Virginia seven.

### SHOCKED SPARROWS

David L. Beach of Athol found a large number of sparrows apparently lifeless on the ground early one morning. He picked them up and one by one they revived. It is believed that all had been shocked in an electric storm of the night before while in some trees.

### HUGE NEW X-RAY

To reduce the cost of treatment and increase its effectiveness, an X-ray tube has been invented which is said to radiate five or six times as many curative rays as ordinary tubes. Thus the time of exposure is cut down. Another process is being perfected to extend the use of the X-rays to internal cancer.

### NEW RADIUM DEPOSITS.

A Belgian mission sent to the Katanga district of the Congo is said to have found extensive radium-bearing deposits. During the war a Belgian sold in London colcolite rich in radium. He refused to divulge its source, but the Belgian Government immediately instituted a search that led to the Katanga country.

### KILL 300 WOLVES IN MONTH.

State wolf hunters in the Upper Peninsula destroyed more than 300 wolves a month during the spring. Sam Bennett of Kenton and his dog Sandy are the champion wolf hunters of Michigan. Mr. Bennett has hunted and trapped most of his life. His dog is sixteen years old. Sandy and his owner did away with twenty-eight wolves in a little over a month. When a den is located the wolves are dug out and killed or shipped to the State Game Farm at Mason.

### THE COW WHIPPED THE RATTLER.

Cattle pasturing or browsing in localities infested by rattlesnakes detect the dangerous presence of the reptiles by scent, a fact which observation and experiment have positively established. As a rule, when a rattlesnake is thus scented, the animal will either hasten away from the spot or change the direction of its feeding.

Deer also detect rattlesnakes by scent, but, instead of retreating from the reptile, follow up the scent and attack the rattler or rattlers. They have a deadly hatred for the venomous snakes,

and destroy large numbers of them by tramping them to death with their fore feet, which they handle so dexterously that a snake once attacked by them rarely escapes.

The rule of retreating from the proximity of rattlesnakes on the part of cattle was broken the other day by a fine Alderney cow that was pasturing on an old meadow on Bald Hill, a locality up South Branch, Pa., with a wide reputation for rattlesnakes. There were several cows in the field, and a boy who was crossing it noticed that first one and then another one of the cows, as they fed along toward a boggy place, raised her head, sniffed the air, and then turned away from the spot. The boy knew that the cows had scented a rattlesnake, and all but one of them avoided it. That one was the Alderney cow. She stood still with her head raised for a moment, and gave it a peculiarly ugly shake, and fed on directly toward the spot where the snake was lying. The cow had gone but a few steps when the snake sprang its rattles. The cow stopped and hesitated between retreat and holding her ground. Looking ahead, the boy discovered the rattlesnake lying by a bog a few feet beyond where the cow stood, and he started to drive her away from her danger, but she had made up her mind by this time, and with a vicious bellow, she rushed forward with her head lowered to catch the snake on her horns. The rattler made his strike, and sank his fangs in the cow's lower lip. The cow shook the snake loose and backed away, lashing her sides furiously with her tail, while the rattler coiled again in expectation of another attack.

The cow stood still a moment, and then, with a louder, madder bellow than before, dashed once more upon the snake. This time the rattler struck his assailant in the nose. Again he was shaken loose and the cow plunged upon him as he coiled for a third strike and planted both fore feet upon him, crushing him in several places. Still the rattler continued to fight, trying to coil and strike, but the cow trampled him again under her feet and continued trampling him until the reptile was ground into bits. During the fight between the cow and the rattler the other cows stopped feeding and stood gazing at the contest with head high in the air and flashing eyes, as if they had understood the deadly peril of their companion. If they did they had good reason, for, although the cow got home with the others that afternoon, she died from the effects of the rattlesnake's bites an hour later.

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ETHEL ROSEMAN, PUBLISHER AND EDITOR  
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## INTERESTING ARTICLES

## DOG'S BARKING A CRIME

When a dog barks at night in Japan the owner is arrested and sentenced to work for a fixed time for the neighbors whose slumbers may have been disturbed.

## COMPRESSED WHEAT

An odd suggestion comes from England as to conserving wheat, says the Scientific American. It is proposed to crush or rough grind wheat, then soften with superheated steam and compress in hard blocks and store until wanted, when a simple crushing process would fit it for flour manufacture.

## KEEPING HOUSEHOLD ICE

A Manchester, N. H., woman has used the same piece of ice since Christmas. She had to put food in the ice chest to keep it from freezing because her pantry is not heated. The ice kept the food in condition, and as it melted it froze in the pan beneath and was ready for replacement.

## NIGHT PROWLERS

Byrd Shiriers, of Big Laurel, Va., was losing some of his fowls from the poultry house, and, believing a fox to be the thief, he set a large trap. The next night he heard a great commotion at the poultry house, and someone cry out as if in great pain. Mr. Shiriers dressed himself hastily and ran out to investigate. He caught the thief, but the marauder was no fox, but proved to be a man, who promised to never do the like again, and was allowed to go to his home and plaster his wounds.

## BRAINS GOOD AS GRANDPA'S?

Brains of New Orleans, La., youth will be pitted against brains of New Orleans youth of fifty years ago. Eighth grade examination papers and the grades registered half a century ago have been unearthed by the school board. Four subjects are covered, United States history, arithmetic, geography and English grammar. The same tests will be given to the children of the present eighth grades and comparisons of the two periods will be made.

## CHARGED RIVER KILLS DOG

A strange accident happened some time ago, at Labonne, near Lausanne. Mme. Piaget saw her sheep dog run down the bank to the river for a drink, lick the water and then fall dead. She informed a gendarme, who, accompanied by another man, descended to recover the body of the dog. When they touched the animal both were knocked down by a violent electric shock and for several minutes remained senseless.

The river had been electrified by the escaping energy from a near-by factory. After the accidents the current was cut off and an expert was summoned to make an examination.

Mme. Piaget intends to sue the proprietor of the factory for the loss of her dog.

## THE MYSTIC NUMBER SEVEN

Not only the ancients, but many people of the present day, highly revere the number seven, a number derived from four, signifying the natural, and three, signifying the spiritual world.

Pythagoreans deemed seven the perfect number, because it was made up of three and four—the triangle and the square—two perfect figures.

God added His seven days to His promised patience toward the old world; clean beasts and birds were taken into the ark by sevens. The ark rested in the seventh month, and doves were sent out at intervals of seven days.

The years of plenty and famine in Egypt and their emblems were by sevens. The seventh day was blessed and made holy by the Creator, and the seventh year was ordained a Sabbath of rest to the land; the seventh time seventh year was the jubilee.

The great feasts were observed for seven days.

Seven priests with seven trumpets surrounded Jericho for seven days, and seven times seven on the seventh day. And we find in Revelations the seven churches, seven candlesticks, seven stars, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven thunders, seven vials, seven plagues, seven angels and seven-headed monster.

Seven, as translated, means sufficiency, fullness. Seven in Scripture often signifies a great, a complete number.

Seven years was the period of repentance, and the prophet praised God seven times a day.

A leprous person, house or garment was made clean by dipping or sprinkling seven times.

Samson kept his nuptials seven days. Seven locks were shaven from him, and he was bound by seven withes.

The first temple of Solomon was seven years in building, and the second was built by Zerubabel, after seventy years of captivity.

The theological ladder had seven rounds, referring to the four cardinal and three theological virtues.

Seven is required to make a perfect lodge, with seven officers, and the summit of ancient craft masonry is said to be reached when the three lodge and four chapter degrees are taken, and the august mysteries are discovered.

In Persian mysteries were seven caverns, in the Gothic, seven obstructions were called the "road of the seven stages."

There were seven "champions of Christendom," "seven wise men of Greece" "seven wonders of the world," "seven sleepers," and Rome was called the "seven-hilled city." Then the names of our seven days came from seven deities of the Goths.

Seven altars burned before the god Mithras, and the Hindoos supposed the world to be inclosed within seven peninsulas.

We might go on indefinitely. The subject is inexhaustible, for, as we have seen, the figure seven plays a most conspicuous part not only in theology, but in history, astronomy, mythology and masonry, and it is not to be wondered at that we have come to regard it as sacred, and altogether above every other number.



## FROM EVERYWHERE

### WHERE SKIN IS THICKEST.

The skin on the palm of the hand is normally twenty times as thick as the skin on the eyelid. The palms of the workingman are even thicker.

### U. S. WOODCUTTING

One hundred million cords of wood are cut for fuel annually from the forests and wood lots of this country.

### WHERE ARE INDIANS?

Twenty-eight of the forty-eight States of the Union have Indian residents among their populations.

### INTERESTING ITEMS

Dr. B. Eberle of Basel, Switzerland, collected the blood that flowed from severe hemorrhages and reinjected it into the patients. Seven out of twelve cases recovered.

### TOURISTS ROLLS OFF PYRAMID TO DEATH

A Czecho-Slovakia tourist recently slipped enroute to the top of the great pyramid, rolling down the slope of the 450-foot monument to his death.

### SEND BLOOD BY MAIL

Country doctors can now send a specimen of a patient's blood through the mail and have it correctly analyzed in the most up-to-date metropolitan laboratories hundreds of miles away. Dr. Henry J. John of the Cleveland Clinic describes a vacuum tube for collecting and preserving blood samples. It will hold about one and a half cubic inches of blood and contains a small quantity of a drug, fluoride thymol, in the form of a powder, which prevents the blood from clotting and preserves it in the original condition in which it was taken from the patient. The tube is easily used and will doubtless prove of great value not only to the practitioners who do not have access to a laboratory, but to insurance companies, many of which are now requesting blood sugar tests of applicants for policies.

### CHINESE EASY TO READ

Chinese, oldest of languages, is commonly thought of as the most difficult. But this is an error, if the difficulty of the language is measured by the speed with which it may be read.

Prof. Walter R. Miles, of the Department of Experimental Psychology of Leland Stanford University, and Eugene Shan, a graduate student, in a series of comprehensive tests have learned that Chinese may be read more rapidly than English, and that type set vertically is more efficient and causes less eye strain than type set as is that, according to *Science Magazine*.

In arriving at these conclusions, Dr. Miles made use of eleven Chinese students, all of whom were born in China and were brought up on "vertical newspapers"; that is, on Chinese print reading up and down. He photographed their eyes, meas-

uring their movements and noting how long each rested on a single group of words and calculating from that their speed in reading the two classes of selections. It was found that the eye is never absolutely still, for when photographing a member fixed on a single spot, its edges left a hazy outline on the negative.

The selections read were in both English and Chinese, taken from a magazine article. The Chinese was set both horizontally and vertically for various experiments. It was found that at each reading pause the eye perceived a greater number of words of vertical type than of horizontal, while a greater number of vertical words were read each second than were horizontal words.

The vertical reading matter, which Dr. Miles found to be more efficient, if applied to newspaper and magazine columns in the United States would bring about this change: You would commence reading at the upper right-handed corner of the column or page and read down, progressing by columns from right to left. Each succeeding letter of a word would be set beneath its predecessor rather than alongside. Punctuation marks to indicate pauses, sentences and paragraphs would be used as at present.

### RADIUM IN THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA

Radioactive substances have been found by Professor Joly, the distinguished physicist of the University of Cambridge, to be far more abundant in the deposits on the floor of the deeper parts of the ocean than in any terrestrial rocks or earths. This has been learned from an examination of samples of the bottom mud brought home by recent deep-sea dredging expeditions, especially that lately conducted by John Murray in the *Michael Sars*. These radioactive substances are mainly inherent in the red clay which constitutes the floor of the abysses, the various other muds and ooze, which are more or less calcareous in their nature, forming at medium depths, because the carbonate of lime constituting the shells of molluscs and of many kinds of animalcules are wholly dissolved before they reach the greater depths. Hence ooze composed of limy materials can be laid down only in comparatively shallow water. This red clay, characteristic of the bottom wherever it is more than about two and one-half miles beneath the surface, is a clay deposit derived principally from wind-carried volcanic dust and pumice decomposed by long exposure to the chemical action of sea-water. It contains nodules of manganese iron, certain crystals, round particles of meteoric origin, and spicules from silicious animalcules (radiolarians), and has imbedded in it a profusion of flinty sharks' teeth and the dense ear bones of whales, always coated with a mineral crust. Many of the sharks' teeth are of extinct species known otherwise by fossil remains, which is one evidence of the extremely low rate of the deposition of this clay where almost no material from the far-away land can be added to it. It seems impossible to get any data as to what the rate of deposit may be, but it must be incalculably slow; and to this fact is probably due its excessive richness in radium.



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